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The Passing of  
The Shereefian Empire









*The Sultan Moulay el Hafid.*





# The Passing of The Shereefian Empire

BY

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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS book is intended as a record of events in Morocco during the past two years as they have come under my personal observation. This period has been perhaps the most momentous and critical in the history of the country, and from it will surely date the decline of Morocco's independence. I was present during the early part of the French campaign in the Chaouia, and was one of the very first to go to Fez, and to meet Moulai el Hafid after his successful advance on the capital from Morocco city. I lived for some months on most intimate terms with the Sultan, before he was acknowledged by the Powers, at a time when he could be approached with a facility now no longer possible, and I had many opportunities of forming an estimate of his character and abilities. As an instructive contrast, I was also brought into contact with Abdul Aziz during the closing months of his troubled reign. My main object in writing this book is to show how the Shereefian

Empire is gradually losing its independence and passing into the limbo of European dependencies. The change is inevitable, for civilisation cannot be held for ever at bay; but all who are lovers of ancient dynasties which have fallen into decay will hope that the reformation may be brought about with as little change as possible in the customs and institutions of the Moorish people.

To superficial observation it may appear that Moulai el Hafid is firmly established on the throne, now that he has finally defeated and captured that Arch Disturber of the public peace, Bou Hamana, better known as the "Rogui"; but in reality Moulai el Hafid has only been able to achieve his triumph with the direct assistance of the French, and this debt he cannot repudiate in the future. Their military mission, which went to Fez in January of this year, has in some measure restored order out of chaos in his army, and has provided or trained gunners for his artillery. It was the possession of this arm which turned the scale in his favour.

Financially the Sultan is bound hand and foot, and is entirely dependent upon Europe for his credit. At any time the Customs receipts collected by the State Bank can be withheld from him, and this would mean the immediate paralysing of the central power of the Maghzen, for at present this is the only certain source of revenue in the country. Neither can the Sultan

buy a single rifle for the use of his army unless the Legations at Tangier jointly give their consent. Therefore, unless he acts strictly in conformity with the wishes of the Powers, Moulai el Hafid will have great difficulty in retaining his precarious throne.

Europe has been horrified by the tortures and mutilations inflicted on the unfortunate followers of Bou Hamara, and the author of them is regarded as little better than a brutal savage of the type of the Dey of Algiers; but this verdict is rather premature and severe. Those who, like myself, know him intimately, do not believe Moulai el Hafid to be a cruel man at heart. Such treatment as was meted out to the Rogui's followers cannot be condoned, but it is only fair to take into consideration certain facts which, in the universal disgust excited by his actions, are apt to be overlooked. Morocco is still in a state of primitive barbarism: the tribes can only be held in check by the dread which the power of a strong Sultan inspires in their undisciplined minds; and in restoring ancient time-honoured punishments, put aside under the feeble sway of Abdul Aziz, Moulai el Hafid only acted strictly in conformity with the law of the Koran and with the custom of his most distinguished predecessors. The Powers have lodged their well-timed protest, and the Sultan has promised not to act again in a similar manner.



Since this book went to press I have witnessed yet another step in the gradual disintegration of the Shereefian Empire, having been attached to the Spanish army at Melilla as "Reuter's Special Correspondent." Spain has no legal right to the Beni-Buifour mines, for the concessions were obtained from Bou Hamara, who had no power to dispose of them. The action of the Spanish Government is also in direct contravention of the Act of Algeiras. Nevertheless, Spain has received the sanction of Europe to restore order amongst the Riffs, whose natural hostility she provoked by acts totally opposed to the whole spirit of that international agreement. The Riffs have fought for their independence with a heroic fortitude which has commanded the admiration of all observers, but even as I write these words the guns of an army forty thousand strong are sounding the death-knell of their liberty. No doubt, in the long-run, the mass of the people will benefit by the change of government.

I have to acknowledge my very great indebtedness to Colonel D. F. Lewis, C.B., for the assistance he has given me in writing the account of the Spanish Campaign in the Riff; and to Mr J. P. Anderson for preparing the latter part of this work for the Press.

E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT.

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## ERRATA.

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Marzhen *should be* Maghzen on pp. 14, 24, 148, 255 (3), 256, 258, 263, 265 (2), 266, 267, 286, 288, 291, 297, 332.









# THE PASSING OF THE SHEREEFIAN EMPIRE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### MOROCCO AND THE POWERS.

DURING the last decade Morocco has occupied a very prominent position on the chess-board of European diplomacy, and on more than one occasion has almost made good Prince Bismark's famous prophecy that there would be found the cause of the next European war. Up to the present this evil has been avoided, thanks to the immense strides which diplomacy, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the spirit of humanity, has made during the last few years. And now, unless the unforeseen occurs, the gradual transformation, by which Morocco ceases to be an independent State and passes into the limbo of European dependencies, will be accomplished without resort to arms. As usual, the trouble has been caused by the jealousies and rivalries of the

Powers, which invariably become manifest when one of the older civilisations falls into decay and ripens for partition and spoliation. The leading actors in the Moroccan drama have been France and Germany, and it is their conflicting interests which have brought Europe to the verge of war. Other nations have been dragged in and forced to take sides, but their interests have only been secondary throughout, and have followed in the wake of one of the two rivals. It is strange, unnatural, and somewhat disquieting to find England playing the rôle of a second in the struggle for the spoils of a decaying Sheræefian empire, when, to judge from her record in the past, she should be endeavouring to obtain the lion's share. But although England to-day has greater commercial interests in Morocco than any other Power, she has pursued no independent policy since she undertook to give the French a free hand in Morocco, in return for France's acceptance of her administration and occupation of Egypt. This arrangement was come to in the Anglo-French agreement of 1904. The morality of the transaction can be called in question, and it marks the radical difference in the views of the Conservative statesman over the disposal of his own property and that which belongs to others. The very Minister who is the first to cry out in horror at the ethics and doctrines of Socialism, which threaten the summary confiscation of his own property, does not hesitate to sign away in a short hour the liberty and the possessions of the free people of a friendly neighbouring State. He

glories in the transaction, and is praised for an understanding which will improve the relations and smooth over the friction between two civilised Powers. The people are delighted with the success which has attended their respective Minister's efforts, and they seal the bargain by forming that vague bond of brotherhood known as an *entente*. No one gives a thought to the ten millions who are to lose the freedom they have enjoyed for fourteen hundred years by the transaction. But apparently in high politics a statesman's views on the duty which one citizen owes to another can radically differ once his own frontier is passed, and in the relations of neighbouring peoples no moral guidance can be drawn from the old axiom of "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

In the story of Morocco we see illustrated the remarkable changes that come over the relations of States in the course of a century, or even in the passing of a decade. During the last ten years there has been a complete reshuffle of the Powers, and those who guided the destinies of Europe twenty years ago would be hopelessly lost could they but reappear on the altered chess-board. Throughout almost the whole of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth England and France were engaged in a life-and-death struggle for the possessible quarters of the globe. Waterloo restored peace for a period of forty years. A century later we find the old enemies working hand-in-hand, and England actually holding the arena whilst her

former rival reaps the spoils. Germany saved England from defeat at the hands of the French by coming to her assistance in the nick of time at Waterloo; a century later England saves France from diplomatic defeat at the hands of Germany by coming to her assistance and acting as her ally at the conference of Algieras. During the great struggle for colonial expansion between England and France there was hardly a quarter of the globe which did not see the rival nations at blows. Thanks to her command of the sea and to the overweening ambition of Napoleon, England secured the larger share of the spoils, and up to the present she has succeeded in retaining them. The forty years of peace which followed Waterloo did not put an end to the rivalries of France and England, and they broke out again with renewed vigour, though without actual resort to arms, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Time and time again the two nations have been brought to the verge of war by their rivalries in Egypt, Nigeria, and Senegal; and the Fashoda incident came as a climax to the long-drawn-out struggle. Since Fashoda diplomacy has gradually gained the upper hand. The two nations have at length realised that there is enough for all, and a *modus vivendi* was sought for and found. Foreign Ministers set to work to divide the spoils of Northern Africa between England and France, and to carefully define the share of each, so that no disputed claim should arise in the future to jeopardise their good relations. The principal

bone of contention was England's occupation of Egypt, and it became necessary to find compensation of peculiar value to reconcile France to our refusal to withdraw from that country. The weight to balance the scales was found in Morocco. England promised France a free hand, and the French were well satisfied, for they had long cast eager eyes on that rich and unexploited land. From the geographical standpoint it is natural for France to undertake the regeneration and development of Morocco, for its eastern and southern frontiers are coextensive with those of France's great colony, Algeria. It is somewhat surprising that Morocco should have succeeded in maintaining her independence so long, when it is recalled that the French conquest of Algeria commenced as far back as 1830, and the Moors were decisively defeated at Isly in 1844. But the Franco-German war checked France's expansions in Northern Africa and postponed the fulfilment of her ambitious dreams. When the majority of French troops were withdrawn, a general rebellion broke out in Algeria, and many French settlers lost their lives. Thus, in a measure, the conquest of Algeria had to be recommenced, and France preferred to consolidate and safeguard that which she already possessed, rather than rush headlong into fresh fields of conquest. But the inevitable day was only postponed, and French eyes have ever been fixed on the fertile plains of Morocco. When England entered into her compact with France over Egypt, the prize seemed already won and ready

to be picked up when the right moment arrived. Morocco lay bankrupt and incapable of resistance at the mercy of France, and we might never have heard of a Moroccan question, except in so far as the general pushing forward of the French frontier attracted attention, had not a third party appeared on the scene to throw down the gage of discord.

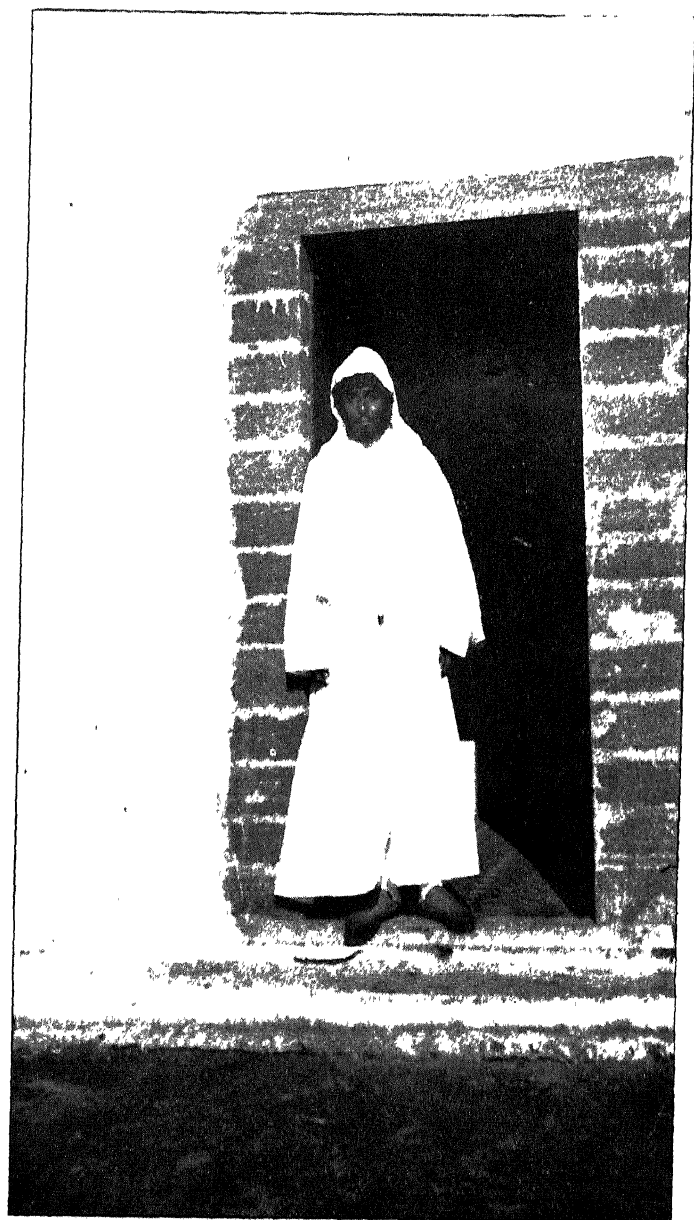
Germany suddenly awoke to the fact that she, like her rivals, France and England, had a need for colonies and possessions throughout the world. The sympathy of all impartial onlookers must be with the Germans in the predicament in which they found themselves. They started too late in the race of colonial expansion, after the choicest prizes had already been secured, and like some runner who has got off the mark after the crack of the pistol, Germany has made desperate efforts to secure a place. Her interests are in many ways hostile to our own, but it is easy to understand and to make allowance for her ambitions. How would we feel in England if, at the beginning of the twentieth century, we, a highly developed, rapidly expanding people, found ourselves hemmed in by a ring of hostile frontiers, and unable to find new worlds for our superfluous population and their expanding energies? Yet this is the position in which Germany stands to-day. Wherever she seeks new fields for her population, and for the disposal of her resources, she finds her rivals already settled in their possessions, and the disposal of those lands not yet occupied already arranged by diplomacy. In

despair, Germany flings herself, like some hungry lion, on any spoils which yet remain. She occupied Kow Chou and founded a colony in South-Eastern Africa, but these have been of small value to her, for the fairest portions are already gone, and there is very little left to take. But this does not reconcile her to her lot. When she realised that France intended to colonise Morocco, Germany determined to secure a portion of the spoils for herself, or, if that was not possible, to prevent her rivals from having it. Thus Germany suddenly stepped into the arena as the champion of Morocco's independence. The German Emperor's visit to Tangier in 1905 was intended as a set-off to the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, and it was the signal of an aggressive German policy. It was a hint to Europe that Germany would not be content to look on and play a passive rôle whilst her rivals reaped the spoils. Abdul Aziz was told he could rely on Germany's support; and Dr Rosen, during his visit to Fez, stated in no uncertain language that the first French soldier who crossed the Moorish frontier would give the signal for a German attack on France. Since the Emperor's visit the peace of Europe has been constantly endangered by the jealousies and rivalries of France and Germany. It was the desire of each to obtain a preponderating influence at the court of Abdul Aziz, and thus acquire particular rights and interests which would give her an advantage over her rivals; for at this time, it must be remembered, there was no Act



of Algeceiras to stand in the way of individual enterprise. We see similar intrigues and struggles for influence round the court of Abdul Aziz as were waged by France and England a century ago round the courts of the Indian princes. But neither of the most interested parties ever succeeded in making much headway with Abdul Aziz. It was the English who held most of the important positions round his throne; but as England, since her understanding with France, had no axe to grind in Morocco, their efforts have unfortunately been wasted. Sir Harry Maclean and his little band of supporters are to be condoled with. A century ago, when conditions were different and all the preliminary work of conquest was accomplished by individual enterprise, they might have been numbered amongst the great men of the age. They would have been the Clives, Eyre-Coates, Wolfes, and others who spread British dominion throughout the world. But under modern conditions, where everything is carefully settled in the State Cabinets, and the results transmitted to the most remote corners of the globe by telegraph, there is no longer scope for individual enterprise, and those men, who would formerly have been considered pioneers of Empire, are now regarded as adventurers and filibusters.

Whilst the struggle amongst the nations was becoming more and more acute, the internal affairs of Morocco were also approaching a crisis, which was precipitated by the weak character and bad government of Abdul Aziz and his corrupt gang of



*The Sultan Abdul Aziz.*



Ministers and advisers. It is doubtful if a strong and wise Sultan could have saved his country from the eventual loss of its independence, but the conduct of Abdul Aziz gave the people the opportunity of attributing all their misfortunes to him. Under his father, Moulai Hassan, Morocco enjoyed prolonged internal peace, and her relations with the Powers remained strictly correct. Moulai Hassan knew his country and the character of the people whom he was called upon to rule. He travelled constantly amongst the unruly tribes, collected the taxes, and punished the rebellious. Thus he made his name respected as a ruler and as a man by living as a true Mahomedan, and by maintaining all the highest traditions of Islam. He associated as little as possible with Christians; he introduced no European customs, and instituted no reforms. On his death, fourteen years ago, his policy was continued with marked success by the Grand Vizier, who proved himself to be one of the best rulers Morocco ever had, and whilst he held the reins of power there was internal and external peace for the distracted land. But Moulai Hassan was most unfortunate in the choice of his successor. He gave the royal parasol, which is the insignia of royalty, to his child, Abdul Aziz, who was the son of a favourite Circassian slave. The Grand Vizier concealed the news of the Sultan's death for fourteen days, in order that the child, who was then at Tetuan, might be brought to Fez and installed as Sultan before any rivals could challenge his succession. Abdul Aziz was brought up amongst the women of the harem, saw little or

nothing of the outside world, and exercised no authority until after the death of the Vizier. Then, like so many other princes who have lost a trusted adviser, and who suddenly find power and authority thrust upon them, he proved himself quite incapable of bearing the burden. From the first he assumed the pose of an enlightened monarch, who preferred to rule on constitutional lines, and not with the homely brute force of his ancestors. He introduced innovations and reforms with a reckless disregard of whether they were popular with the people or if the times were ripe for them. He speedily wearied of the society and the advice of his father's old friends and trusted advisers, preferring to follow the counsels, and to assimilate the habits, of the Europeans whom he found around his throne. His initial efforts at reform were confined to his palace and harem. A State coach was accepted from an enterprising American; motor cars were brought up from Tangier in sections, and put together inside the palace, where their rumblings, their explosions, their noisome smells, and the dust thrown up by their rapid transit, filled the minds of the fanatical followers of the Prophet with horror and with shame. The ladies of the harem were presented with bicycles, and daily disported themselves in the palace grounds, to the horror of the orthodox. Innumerable clocks of all patterns and all shapes adorned the palace walls; and over-dressed dolls, musical boxes, phonographs, Teddy bears, and mechanical toys helped to wile away the hours which should have been devoted to affairs

of State. Tennis - courts and polo - grounds were laid out ; a billiard-table was brought up on the back of a camel, and set up in the palace, and alongside it was constructed a bar at which the thirsty might refresh themselves. Here of an afternoon Abdul Aziz would repair to the select circle of his little English coterie and take a cue against all comers, delighted to escape from his Ministers and bothersome affairs of State. His revels on these occasions have become traditional among the Fasi, and the familiarities practised by his companions shocked the susceptibilities of all true Mahommedans. On one occasion they rolled the young Sultan over the table ; on another they dressed him in the uniform of an instructor and photographed him. Clad in this ridiculous and unseemly garb, the picture of the Supreme Calif was circulated throughout the Shoreefian empire, and helped still further to incite the anger and disgust of the Moorish people. An enterprising Frenchman went to Fez, accompanied by a Parisian coquette, and introduced his paramour to Abdul Aziz as his lawful wife. The young Sultan soon fell a prey to her experienced charms, and she was admitted at guilty hours into the innermost recesses of the harem. Pretending one day to discover this intrigue, the indignant Frenchman demanded instant reparation for the break up of his happy home, and for the irreparable insult to his personal honour. He threatened to expose Abdul Aziz to his outraged subjects in the undignified and unfamiliar rôle of a co-respondent ; and in order to hush up the affair and to escape

from the scandal, the Sultan recompensed his visitor by the gift of large tracts of land in the neighbourhood of Tangier, which are said now to be worth the modest sum of three hundred thousand pounds.

Abdul Aziz even went so far as to lay a light railroad from his palace to his garden, only half a mile away. The unfamiliar sight and the sound of the engine excited the anger of the good citizens, who feared the advent of innovations of an even more alarming character. These actions, of which I have given a few typical examples, served to lower the prestige of the Sultan, and to arouse the legitimate anger and discontent of his people.

But Abdul Aziz did not confine his innovations and his reforms to his private life. He attempted to introduce them, with disastrous results, into affairs of State; but, as he was entirely without experience in public matters, and possessed no aptitude for government, the administration quickly passed out of his hands into those of his Ministers. Thus commenced an orgie of corruption and misgovernment such as has seldom been equalled. The finances of the State were hopelessly squandered, and the money which should have been used in the administration, or for the army, or to purchase the loyalty of the tribes, simply drifted into the pockets of the brothers Tassi, El Nehbi, and a score of lesser lights. Most of these gentlemen are now living in luxury in Tangier or Algeciras, whilst the monarch whom they robbed and betrayed has been obliged to ask

the infidel to obtain a small annual pension for his support from his brother Moulai el Hafid. Thus the unfortunate Abdul Aziz was continually put to desperate straits to raise enough to meet his own household expenses. Finally he had to resort to the foreign capitalist, which is generally the commencement of the end, the final death-struggle of semi-barbarous States. He raised money on the State jewellery; by selling Government land in the neighbourhood of the coast towns; and by pledging the Customs of his country in return for a loan from France. English and German financiers also came to his assistance; but France was the largest creditor, and the finances of Morocco are now hopelessly mortgaged to her. The interest on these various loans was never regularly forthcoming, and consequently France took over the control of the Customs and appointed officials to work in conjunction with those of the Marzhen to ensure the proper collection of the dues. Of the Customs receipts France retained sixty per cent for interest and sinking fund, and the other forty per cent was paid to Abdul Aziz. This mortgage of the finances of Morocco to the infidel did Abdul Aziz an immense amount of harm amongst the tribes, the majority of whom had long been out of hand and were ripe for rebellion. Since the death of Moulai Hassan the taxes had not been collected. The young Sultan never travelled through the unruly tribes making his presence felt as did his father; and the imperial treasury became so bankrupt that it was impossible to maintain an army of sufficient strength to enable him to uphold



his authority. It is remarkable that the end did not come sooner, and it was only the constant jealousies and bickerings amongst the tribesmen themselves which enabled Abdul Aziz to keep on the throne for fourteen years. He was within an ace of losing it at the time of the Ragu's rebellion in 1902, and had the latter displayed a little more resolution when he was within a day's march of the gates of Fez, he might now be Sultan of Morocco. The only way to keep the tribes in subjection is to oppress them, and this is done by regularly collecting the taxes. If a Moor finds himself with a few spare dollars he proceeds to buy a horse, a saddle, a rifle, and cartridges. Thus equipped he is ready for trouble, and sets out to look for it, and from the moment Abdul Aziz ascended the throne they knew the strong arm was no more.

In any study of Moroccan affairs it is always well to bear in mind that there are two distinct factors in the problem, and that the settlement of the one is almost certain to cause the unsettlement of the other. They are - (1) The Sultan must consent to the terms of the Powers. (2) His policy towards Europe must be sufficiently independent to please his subjects. The Powers have invariably tried to solve the Moroccan question with a view to maintaining the peace of Europe, not with the idea of restoring the internal peace of Morocco, or of strengthening the central authority of the Marzhen. It is the desire of Europe to find a *modus vivendi* whereby each of the Powers may pursue its commercial

interests without arousing the jealousy and mistrust of its neighbours. It was the desire of all parties to find a peaceful settlement, and to remove the storm-clouds which continually threatened Europe, which led to the passing of the Act of Algeciras. The Act was really the work of Germany, and was intended to ensure for all time the independence of Morocco, to prevent France from carrying into effect her territorial ambitions and gradually colonising Morocco as she had colonised Algeria. The Act was meant (1) to guarantee the future of Morocco as an independent State; (2) to prevent any one Power acquiring commercial and territorial rights and privileges to the detriment of others; (3) to introduce administrative and financial reforms which would be beneficial to Morocco; (4) to protect European lives and property against sudden fanatical outbursts.

Its leading provisions were the establishment of a State Bank; the policing of the coast towns; the limitation of the rights of foreigners to acquire land; to ensure in a manner most beneficial to Morocco the carrying out of all public works. The State Bank gives the three interested Powers—England, France, and Germany—the right to participate equally in the raising of Government loans, and was designed to prevent any one Power from acquiring exclusive control of the finances of the country. The Act has worked admirably as between the Powers, and it has practically put an end to quarrels and disputes between France and Germany. But although the Act of

Algceiras has been instrumental in preserving the peace of Europe, it acted as a bombshell amongst the mass of inflammable fanaticism, and ready to explode in Morocco. It set the seal to Abdul Aziz's unpopularity, and led up to the loss of his throne. He was accused of having sold his country to the foreigner, of having squandered the finances, and of having accepted any terms which Europe liked to offer him. These accusations were hardly borne out by the facts, because Abdul Aziz had no alternative but to accept the Act, as the Powers had every intention of passing and enforcing it, whether he agreed to its provisions or not. Thus when the Italian Minister went up to Fez to obtain his signature, he acquiesced with the best grace possible. But the difficulties of his position were not understood by the mass of his subjects, who regarded it either as a voluntary surrender, or as the natural corollary to years of misgovernment, waste, and corruption. From the moment of the passing of the Act of Algceiras, which was supposed to settle the Moroccan question for all time, the fate of Abdul Aziz was sealed. He became merely a puppet of the Powers, and was regarded with contempt by the mass of his people, who only awaited a favourable opportunity to get rid of him. The direct cause of the passing of the Act was a violent outbreak of anti-foreign feeling throughout the country. The general disorder showed clearly to what a state of ineptitude the Government had sunk. In the neighbourhood of Tangier Raisuli practised open brigandage, and ended by capturing

Sir Harry Maclean. All Abdul Aziz's horses and all Abdul Aziz's men could not effect the release of his old friend and adviser. The Sultan sent *mahalla* after *mahalla* against Raisuli and his bandits, but they dwindled away or allowed themselves to be defeated in order to sell their rifles to the enemy. Thus Raisuli scored the crowning triumph of his eventful life. He secured a large sum of ready money, and the rights and protection afforded by British citizenship, for acts which would have gained for him the sole and exclusive right to the branch of the nearest tree in any other country. The highroads were infested by bands of brigands, and the robbery of couriers became frequent. Doctor Mauchamp was murdered in Marrackesh, Charbonnier in Tangier, and as a climax came the outbreak at Casa Blanca, which was destined to change the whole history of Morocco, and to be the direct cause of the loss of her independence.

The passing of the Act of Algeciras has turned out to be a doubtful triumph for German diplomacy, but at one time it seemed as if it was destined to upset all France's ambitious dreams, and to put back the clock of Moroccan conquest for many years. But although France was obliged to agree to the provisions of the Act, she obtained certain special privileges, by the support of England, which have given her a great advantage over her rivals, and have enabled her to override the whole spirit of the Act, and to come forward as the Power whose interests are paramount in Morocco. The Algerian frontier being coextensive

with that of Morocco, she reserved the right to treat independently with Marzhen on all questions arising over the delineation of the frontier line. As her natural line of advance in any aggressive action against the Moors is through Algeria, she can turn this to great advantage. Those clauses in the Act dealing with the policing of the coast towns by a force raised from amongst the Moors, but drilled and commanded by foreign officers, have also been turned by France to good advantage. No clauses in the Act were the subject of more vehement dispute than these. Germany wished the officers and instructors to be drawn from all the nations. France declared, on account of her special interests in Morocco and the proximity of her colony, Algeria, that she should have the sole right to drill and organise the police. Finally a compromise was agreed upon, and the care of the police was confided to a mixed force of French and Spanish officers, having a Swiss colonel as inspector-general. Thus France, by this clause of the treaty, partly made good her claims to be acknowledged as the Power responsible for law and order in Morocco. The cost of the police, of course, falls on the Moorish Government. The police have proved a fair success, but they are intensely unpopular amongst the Moors, and even amongst the Europeans there are generally two parties, one in their favour and the other violently opposed to their methods. Nevertheless, they have undoubtedly done much to ensure the security of life and property in the coast towns.

Thus by having the exclusive charge in conjunction with Spain, who may be described as her sleeping partner, of the lives and property of foreigners in Morocco, France was placed in a position to take what steps she considered necessary for the protection of her interests, and those which had been confided to her by the Powers. It was impossible to define by treaty exactly how far she was entitled to go, and French statesmen desired a test case to see whether France could act independently in Morocco without provoking the hostility of Germany,—in other words, to find out if Germany was bluffing, or if she really meant serious business. Her opportunity came far sooner than was expected, and in such a dramatic manner that it was difficult to accuse her of having exceeded the limit of independent action acknowledged to be hers at the time of the passing of the Act of Algeciras.

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## CHAPTER II.

*THE CASUS BELLI.*

THE destruction of Casa Blanca has been told before, but the story, I hope, will bear repetition, because, quite apart from its dramatic interest, it shows how events of the greatest importance often turn on the most trifling and unexpected incidents. But, apart from its local interest, the loss of Morocco's independence will surely date from the destruction of the town. Casa Blanca was the most prosperous of the Moroccan ports. Its trade, already large, was yearly on the increase, and by far the larger proportion of it was in the hands of enterprising British merchants. The inhabitants numbered 30,000, and were composed, in addition to the Moors and the Jews, of the mixture of all nationalities which one finds in Morocco. The appalling suddenness of the disaster will be realised when it is remembered that on July 30, 1907, the inhabitants of the town were leading their usual peaceful existence, and on August 5 nothing but a heap of smoking ruins remained, and the survivors were desperately holding their own against a horde of bloodthirsty fanatical

Arabs. Yet this catastrophe might have been avoided, for it was directly caused by the hasty, ill-timed action of the officers and crew of a small French cruiser—the *Galilée*. The commander, Ollivier, exceeded his instructions, and officially got himself into hot water; but, in reality, his action has done more to bring about the speedy realisation of French ambitions in Morocco than any other single event. When half a century from now the French are putting up statues to the memory of those who played a glorious rôle in the regeneration of the Shereefian Empire, that of the commander of the *Galilée* should occupy the most honoured position of them all.

The original source of the trouble is to be found in the conditions prevailing in Morocco during the past few years. The Arabs of the interior—that is to say, those who are usually called the tribesmen—have a profound contempt for the town dwellers, who alone, properly speaking, should be called Moors. On the other hand, the tribesmen greatly covet the luxury and comfort in which the town dwellers live, compared to the wretched lot of their own lives, spent in huts and tents. They know that their citizen brothers are no match for them when it comes to fighting, and, consequently, from time to time the tribesmen, having saved a bit of money, and having provided themselves with horses and rifles, descend on the towns, determined to acquire by force the riches which the town Moors have acquired by trade. The tribes round Casa Blanca had long been ripe for trouble, and owing to certain incidents were animated by



feelings of a peculiarly bitter nature against the French, whom they believed to be engaged in subjugating Morocco in conjunction with the Nazarene, Abdul Aziz, as they sarcastically described the Sultan.

In 1906 a French company obtained a concession for the construction of harbour works at Casa Blanca, for, although the port had a valuable import and export trade, there were no quays, docks, or breakwaters at which vessels could unload or find shelter from the periodical storms and heavy rollers of the Atlantic. In March 1907 the work on the port commenced, and in order to transfer the stone necessary for the construction of the breakwater, a light railroad was constructed along the sea-front to a point some 500 yards beyond the outer wall of the town. The Arabs of the interior took immediate exception to this line, which they regarded as a direct menace to the independence of their country. They were further incited by the rails skirting the old Moorish cemetery outside the town, and regarded this as a deliberate insult to their dead. When it was explained to them that the line was simply temporary, they answered with considerable acumen: "Yes; we know the line is only temporary, but after a time you will not be satisfied with the stone in the quarry 500 yards from the town, and then you will make it 500 yards longer until you come to a fresh quarry. After a time you will become dissatisfied with that too, and you will push forward your line 500 yards farther, and so on, until it reaches the heart of our country."

Perhaps the fears expressed by the Arabs were not without reason, for the precedent which was being created was a dangerous one, and undoubtedly the line had come to stay. The Chaouia tribesmen were further aroused by the appointment of French Comptrollers to the Customs, for they considered Abdul Aziz had sold his country to the infidel by allowing them to obtain command of its most profitable source of revenue. Further discontent was also caused by many of the former officials losing their perquisites after the arrival of the French. But these were merely the local causes of discontent which led to the massacre of July 30.

In reality the evil was far more deeply rooted, and was to be found in the general lawlessness which had prevailed in Morocco for many years past owing to the weak character of Abdul Aziz, and which was exemplified by the murder of Dr Mauchamp at Marrackesh and of Charbonnier at Tangier,—crimes which have gone almost unpunished. The people of Morocco were further enraged against the French by the recent occupation of Oudija and other aggressive actions along the Algerian frontier.

The local government of Casa Blanca was in the hands of Si Bou Bekr Ben Bouzid, an amiable but weak-minded Moor, who was incapable of sufficient energy to preserve order in times of emergency. The former Governor was El Hadj Hammou, and his son, Caïd of the powerful Oulez Harriz, had hoped to succeed him in the governorship of the Chaouia, and of Casa Blanca, its capital. He

despised Ben Bouzid, and did everything in his power to stir up the discontent of the Arabs against the Europeans, becoming the prime mover in all the subsequent troubles. Outside the town a *mahalla* of seven hundred of Abdul Aziz's troops was encamped, under the command of his uncle Moulai el Amin, who had been sent into the district some time previously to watch the unruly tribes. From start to finish Moulai el Amin behaved with great loyalty to the Europeans, and without his intervention at a critical moment it is doubtful if many would have survived to tell the tale. Hammou, Caid of the Oulez Harriz, regarded Moulai el Amin as the only real obstacle standing between him and the governorship of the Chaouia, at present held by Ben Bouzid, and was bitterly opposed to him. Casa Blanca was not without warning of the evil days which were to come. On more than one occasion the tribesmen had gathered in great force outside the gates, threatening to loot the town and to drive out the infidels. But up to the present they had been bought off by the payment of a few thousand *pesetas* hastily levied on the townspeople. Nevertheless the Consular body had for some time regarded the position as grave; and a memorial was drawn up, signed by all the Consuls, and sent to the Legation at Tangier, asking that a firmer governor and one better able to deal with the rebellious tribesmen might be sent to Casa Blanca in the place of Ben Bouzid. This request was forwarded to the Murzhen at Fez by the Corps Diplomatique, but only drew forth a some-

what rude reply. The matter was allowed to drop, and Ben Bouzid kept his post. Such was the position of affairs on Sunday, July 28, when a deputation from the eleven Chaouia tribes arrived before Casa Blanca, entered the gates of the town, and asked for an interview with Ben Bouzid. They were shown into the Governor's presence, and immediately laid their demands before him. These were—the instant cessation of the harbour works, and the immediate dismissal of the French Customs officials. The unfortunate Ben Bouzid was quite at a loss how to reply to their demands. A short time previously a deputation had waited on the Caid of Rabat and delivered to him a similar ultimatum. The reply of this bold official is worth recording: "Quite so; let us drive out the French by all means. I am with you. But the Sultan owes them eighty million francs: we must pay them first. I suppose you have brought the money with you?" But Ben Bouzid was not cast in such a heroic mould, and, wishing to gain time, he compromised with the deputation, telling them to return a day later to receive his reply. Unfortunately M. Malpertuy, the French Consul, whose knowledge of and influence with the Moors might have been invaluable at such a crisis, was in France on leave. The French Vice-Consul, M. Maigret, was also absent at Gibraltar, and the Consulate was in charge of a young attaché from Tangier (M. Neuville), who had only been at Casa Blanca for a few weeks. Thus there was no responsible official of the

dominant Power in Morocco for Ben Bouzid to consult in his hour of need. However, he did send for a leading English merchant, and one of the oldest inhabitants of Casa Blanca, to ask his advice, and, had he followed it, the subsequent disaster might have been averted. Mr F—— told Ben Bouzid to close the gates, to put armed guards on the wall, and to shoot all Arabs carrying arms who attempted to enter. But Ben Bouzid, either from stupidity or cupidity, neglected to carry out these instructions, and allowed matters to drift, with fatal results. M. Zajury, the interpreter of the French Legation, a man of great experience, regarded the position as so grave that he sent off a full report to the Marquis Saint Aulaire, the French Chargé d'Affaires at Tangier, by the steamer *Aigle*, which was leaving that same evening, begging him to immediately despatch a warship for the protection of the Europeans.

Meanwhile, on the morning of July 30, the attitude of the tribesmen became still more threatening, and the foreign residents of Casa Blanca were thrown into a state of panic. Large numbers of tribesmen had passed the gates and were stirring up the lower element of the town Arabs to loot the Mella. Fanatics were going about the streets openly preaching a Holy War against the Infidel; but no steps were taken by Ben Bouzid, although he had soldiers and arms at his disposal, to put an end to this fanatical outburst.

A young Portuguese servant was walking

through the streets when he encountered one of the Arabs who was preaching the Holy War and advocating the massacre of the infidel. The Portuguese, instead of feigning not to hear, shrugged his shoulders at the remark, and the fanatic immediately cut at his head with a sword, but happily so as not to inflict serious injury.

By this time the Consular body had become thoroughly alarmed, and met to discuss what measures should be taken for the common security. This was at midday, and they decided to wait in a body on Ben Bouzid and force him to take steps to restore order in the town. But unfortunately some one pointed out that twelve o'clock was the hour sacred to the Consular lunch, and it was unanimously agreed to postpone seeing Ben Bouzid until 2 p.m. Thus this desire to satisfy the cravings of the inner man was allowed to jeopardise the safety of the outer man.

At 2 p.m. the Consuls waited on Ben Bouzid, and whilst they were closeted with him a terrible drama was being enacted outside the walls of the town. There were but few witnesses as to what actually occurred; but one of these, Dr Merle, in charge of the dispensary of the French Consulate, has left a tragic account of what took place.

The houses of Casa Blanca are built right up against the outer walls of the town, and many of them rise above their level. Dr Merle's was one of these. His windows overlooked the sea front, the railroad, and, farther to the right, the

quarry. "At one o'clock," says the doctor, "as I was standing at my window, I saw the engine come out from the woodyard carrying the workmen to the quarry. I thought this a good sign; for if the director allowed the train to resume work, it showed that he had reason to believe that order had been restored in the town. The Arabs were walking about along the road beneath me, and one of them, a stranger to me, cursed me and pointed his umbrella at me as if it were a gun. This struck me as a very disquieting sign, for I had never known an Arab indulge in such a joke at the expense of a European. However, the train reached the quarry. Then a quarter of the way down the line, about 400 yards from Casa Blanca, a band of 150 Arabs, who had seen the train go by from a distance, approached the track, got on it, and made towards the town. When 200 yards away, at the top of the Mossala, a kind of sacred wall which plays a part in Mahomedan ritual, I saw them collect bits of rock and place them on the rails, shouting excitedly. I was watching this singular sight with an anxiety you can easily imagine when I saw, almost at the same moment, for everything happened very quickly, a young workman eighteen or twenty years old, who was either frightened by the attitude of the Moors, or who perhaps had been sent by his comrades to warn the management of the works, running on the sand between the line and the sea towards the town. The natives saw him, left the line, and uttering horrible cries, rushed

in pursuit. They closed with him just as the unhappy man reached the rocky part of the beach, where he slipped and fell. Twenty men, armed with sticks, hurled themselves upon him and beat him to death. At the same moment, at a point happily nearer the gate of the town, a child ten years old, the young David, who was playing there, was saved from his pursuers by a brave Moor, who took him in his arms, and, running as hard as possible, brought him safely to his mother. Horrified by what I had seen, I ran to the Consulate, which I reached the same minute. But M. Neuville, the acting Consul, was at that moment with his *confrères* at the house of Ben Bouzid. I gave instructions for them to go and tell him immediately what had happened, and then returned to my post of observation. The engine, driven by its engine-driver, the Frenchman Rata, was coming slowly towards the town without the trucks,—the workmen having probably judged that it was safer to leave off their work and to get back to the town without further delay. Rata stopped the engine fifty yards in front of the stones placed on the line. I saw these; they were enormous. The Moors were watching their opportunity, and rushed forward shouting and gesticulating, and encouraged by the piercing "*You, yous!*" of the women and children who accompanied them. Rata jumped to the ground, flying not towards the sea but towards the walls of the town. He had not gone fifty yards before he was beaten to death. He fell not far from the cemetery. Again I hastened



to the Consulate that Neuville might learn of this second murder. When I got back to my house I saw a horseman, graceful and well dressed, who rode up and down unceasingly, exciting the people by voice and gesture, and who continually forced his horse into the sea, striking at a third body with a stick. Shortly afterwards some Arabs entered the water and dragged a fourth body on to the rocks. These bodies were pelted with stones, trampled upon, and left exposed. But afterwards, when the bloodthirsty gang had dispersed, the Arab children came back, danced around them, struck at them, and mutilated them."

Dr Merle was not, however, a witness of the entire tragedy, for that was hidden from his sight by the angle of the town wall. The infuriated mob, having disposed of the engine-driver, rushed headlong to the quarry and attacked the workmen therein. Some of the latter offered a desperate resistance, and others, displaying more discretion, ran away and hid. In the end five more men were killed, bringing the total of the morning's work up to nine—three Frenchmen, three Italians, and three Spaniards. The mob then revisited the engine, pulled up the rails, and overturned it on its side, where it lay for many months, a melancholy monument of the wreckage which the wave of civilisation leaves behind when it breaks on the confines of barbarism. Having smashed up the engine, the mob, satisfied with their triumph, dispersed.

It is easy to imagine the feelings of the small

colony of Europeans, isolated in this town of 30,000 inhabitants, seething with fanaticism, when these grave events became known.

The Consuls, who were already at the house of Ben Bouzid, forced him to send out soldiers to rescue the remaining workers in the quarry, and also to bring in the family of Mr Edmund Fernau, who was living in a farm with his wife and two children and their servants, about a mile outside the town. But Ben Bouzid had completely lost his head, and it was left to the Consuls to organise these rescue-parties from amongst the ill-armed, ill-paid, unreliable soldiers who comprised the only force at their disposition. Just as the parties were starting off one of the soldiers quietly remarked that he had no cartridges, and an examination quickly showed that the pouches of the remainder were likewise empty. Ben Bouzid explained that the cartridges were locked up in the Customs House, as it had not been thought safe to entrust the soldiers with them. There was a further delay whilst the doors of the Customs House were forced and the cartridges distributed. Then the soldiers set forth and succeeded in bringing back to town the Fernaus and the remaining workmen hidden in the quarry safely, although all had been marked out for subsequent butchery. Later in the afternoon a party of eight or nine Europeans went out under an escort of soldiers to try and recover the bodies of the victims. Owing to some misunderstanding a quarrel arose between the soldiers and this band, with the result that they were within an

acc of being massacred by those who had been sent out to protect them. The enterprise was abandoned; but the bodies were brought in at night by the Jews. That evening a boat left for Tangier, and Dr Merle was sent with despatches from Neuville to the Marquis St Aulaire, informing him of what had occurred, and begging for immediate assistance. St Aulaire promptly despatched a report by cable to the Foreign Office, and ordered the French third-class cruiser *Galilée*, which was on permanent duty off Tangier, to leave immediately for Casa Blanca.

Meanwhile, on July 31, Moulai el Amin, the Sultan's uncle, charged with the maintenance of peace in Chaouia, who was camped a few miles outside the town, hearing of what had passed, entered the gates with his troops and immediately proceeded to restore order. From the first this old Caid displayed the warmest sympathy with the Europeans, and was unceasing in his efforts to safeguard and protect them. He took the government out of the hands of the feeble Ben Bouzid, and by a strategy cleared the streets of the bands of marauding Arabs. He caused it to be announced that there was to be a great meeting of the tribesmen at a point outside the town to decide what step should be taken to drive the French into the sea and to loot the town. By this simple ruse the majority of the disreputable characters were placed on the other side of the wall. The gates were promptly manned, and all who attempted to enter with arms in their hands were immediately shot. So great,

however, was the panic among the Europeans, especially among the French, against whom the animosity of the Arabs was solely directed, that it was considered safer to embark the whole of the French colony on board the British steamer *Demetria*, which was anchored off the port. This was done by the evening of the 31st. It is not pleasant to relate that many Frenchmen chose to take shelter on this vessel when they would have been better and more honourably employed in assisting their comrades in the defence of the town. By the evening of the 31st complete order had been restored, and the majority of those implicated in the murder, to the number of thirty, were securely lodged in the town jail, and the Moorish officials were quite prepared to deliver them over for trial and punishment. In the early morning of Thursday, August 1, the *Galilée* arrived off the port full of anxiety to play a rôle in the punishment of the rebellious town. Neuville immediately went off and informed the Commander Ollivier on the true position of affairs. He told him that order had been restored, that the town was securely in the possession of Moulai el Amin, and that for the time being everything was quiet. Ollivier and his subordinates wished to land bodies of sailors for the protection of the French and other consulates. Neuville warned him that such an action might lead to the most disastrous results, and would certainly cause another fanatical outburst. If large parties of armed French sailors were seen in the streets, the soldiers of Moulai el Amin would probably make common cause with

the tribesmen, and a general massacre of the foreigners would follow.

The Commander went ashore and had a meeting with the other Consuls, all of whom were unanimous in declaring that if the French attempted a landing without sufficient forces to hold the entire town, it would lead to an outbreak which might result in a complete massacre of all the Europeans and the complete destruction of their property. They drew up a memorial to this effect, dated August 1, which was signed by all the Consuls and handed to Ollivier, who reluctantly returned to his ship. Thus he and his officers were obliged to acquiesce with extreme reluctance in an arrangement which robbed them of the glorious *role* they had hoped to play. It was, however, decided to land half a dozen sailors as a protection to the French Consulate, and also to act as signalmen. In order to hush suspicion these men were brought ashore without arms and walked to the Consulate arm-in-arm, singing songs as if on leave, whilst their rifles and their ammunition were brought ashore hidden among boxes of food, and also conveyed to the Consulate. From August 1 to August 4 no event of any particular interest or importance occurred. The town remained absolutely tranquil, and the tribesmen who had gathered outside the wall also seemed to have retired or to have dispersed. In fact, Mr Charles Hands, the special correspondent of 'The Daily Mail,' told me that he walked with Mr Edmund Fernau for a considerable distance outside the town, neither of them carrying arms, and

they were not molested in any way. Thus all might have gone on peacefully until the arrival of the French ships and the French troops, who were being collected to punish the murderers and to inflict a salutary lesson on the surrounding tribes, had it not been for the misplaced ambition and excitable character of the officers and crew of the French cruiser *Galilée*.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE EFFECT OF NATIONAL CHARACTER.

IN order to account for the deplorable events which followed, it is necessary to consider the state of mind of the officers and crew of the *Galilée*, and also the nature of her occupation. And if one lesson is to be learnt from the disaster at Casa Blanca, it is the evil results which may accrue from keeping a particular ship's company or a particular body of men engaged for too long at an occupation which is dull, often disappointing, and especially uncongenial to men of the excitable nervous character of the French. For three years the *Galilée* had been on duty off the coast of Morocco, ever since France had determined to show to the world the peculiar nature of her special interest in that country by a display of her naval force. The life on a small cruiser anchored off a port like Tangier does not offer many attractions. The seas are large, the pay small, the amusements nil, and the separation from other vessels and the influence of combined manœuvres leads to deterioration in both organisation and discipline with especial rapidity on a

French warship. Apart from the uncongenial character of the daily routine on board the *Galilée*, the life of the officers and crew had been one long series of disappointments. When they first came to Morocco on duty they looked upon the service with favour, for the savage character of the Moors and the frequent disturbances along the coast all seemed to point to opportunities to acquire distinction, promotion, and that vague, mystic, undefinable "la gloire" so beloved by all Frenchmen. But for three years these early dreams failed to materialise. Time and time again on rumours of trouble the *Galilée* had been hastily despatched to one of the Moroccan towns until she had visited all in turn. The guns had been got ready, the ammunition hoists cleared, and every officer had continually been led to believe that the longed-for day in which he might display his prowess had at last arrived. But as often their ambitions had been doomed to disappointment, and the *Galilée* always returned to Tangier having accomplished nothing, and her officers and crew felt humiliated and the butts of some malignant fate. Therefore, when the news reached Tangier on July 31 that nine Europeans, including three Frenchmen, had actually been killed, the crew of the *Galilée* no longer doubted that the day which was to compensate them for the dull years and continual disappointments had at length dawned. They looked forward to bombarding the town, to landing armed parties, to clearing the streets and rescuing distressed women and children of all the nations. Their disappointment and their anger can be well



imagined, when, on their arrival before the distressed port, on the morning of August 1, they were greeted by their own Consular representative, M. Neuville, with the special request that they would not fire a single shot or disembark a single sailor for fear of arousing those smouldering fires of fanaticism which they had been sent to quell. Day by day as they lay off the port and complete tranquillity ruled in the town, the rage, annoyance, and disappointment of the officers and crew grew to white heat. Ollivier, the commander, being cognisant of the real situation in the town, and having received the memorial signed by all, worked loyally with the Consuls, and was fully in accord with their views. But this did not reconcile his younger fire-eating officers to their passive rôle, who, breaking through the strict bonds of discipline, reproached him for his inaction, and begged him to immediately avenge the murder of three of their countrymen. Such scenes as were enacted on the *Galilée* are happily impossible in our own Navy, where the authority of the commanding officer remains unchallenged, however disagreeable to those who are forced to obey. The common sailors, taking the cue from their officers, were also in a state bordering on mutiny, and lovingly stroked the muzzles of their guns as they directed the sights on the principal buildings of the doomed city, in order to have them ready for instant discharge should the longed-for opportunity come. However, all remained tranquil until the afternoon of the 4th, when M. Maigret, the Vice-Consul, who had arrived from Gibraltar,

went on board to consult Ollivier on various steps which should be taken when the expected reinforcements, "la force imposant," which had been promised, arrived to take over the town. The well-meaning Maigret had no sooner stepped on board the *Galilée* than he became the victim of a remarkable outburst. The junior officers gathered round him, reproached him for the passive, dishonourable, and inglorious rôle they were called upon to play, and begged him to find some excuse for a landing-party to be sent ashore. Maigret resisted their importunate clamours, pointed out that the town was perfectly quiet, and told them that if a single armed sailor landed it would certainly lead to further bloodshed. The French officers pleaded with him, and pointed out that four days had elapsed since three of his countrymen had been murdered, and that their deaths were still unavenged. Maigret refused to be moved by their appeals or by the abuse which followed. Then one of them, making a threatening movement, openly accused him of trampling the flag of France under his feet. Pale with anger and shame, Maigret hastened to the quarters of Ollivier, the commander, told him what had occurred, and begged to be exonerated from this foul and unjust imputation. Ollivier reassured him, but Maigret, who up to this point had displayed considerable firmness, now seems to have lost his head, and made the following strange and inconsistent proposition to the commander: "They accuse me of trampling the flag of France under my feet because the murderers are not yet

punished; you can take this course: send an ultimatum to Moulai el Amin, telling him that unless some of the murderers are handed over by a certain time, you will land a party and seize them yourself." Ollivier, however, kept calm, and refused to accede to this request. He reassured Maigrot, and the latter left the ship amid the muttered curses and imprecations of the officers and men. On his arrival at the Consulate he found a letter from Moulai el Amin couched in the following terms: "I am willing, now that order has been restored, to hand over the keys of the town to the French, who can land and take possession of its defence." The courteous and chivalrous Moulai el Amin merely meant to show by this letter that order had been completely restored, and as a sign that he wished to make a complete submission to the French, so as to limit as far as possible the responsibility of his nephew, the Sultan, for what had occurred. Moulai el Amin knew that "la force imposant" might be expected any day, and he wished to avoid further trouble and further calamity by quietly handing over Casa Blanca without resistance to the French on its arrival. It is possible also that the old Moor wished to secure his own position. Maigrot understood the character of the letter, but he made the fatal mistake, knowing the excitable state of the officers and crew of the *Galilee*, of telegraphing its contents to the cruiser. Great was the joy of the latter on its receipt, for now at length it seemed that expectations were to be realised, and they would be allowed to play a glorious part and

enrol their names indelibly on the long list of France's real and imaginary heroes before the arrival of their comrades. At eleven o'clock that same evening the *Galilée* got into touch by wireless telegraphy with the French cruiser *Du Chyala*, which was hastening under orders to Casa Blanca. The *Du Chyala* was at this time off Cape Spartel, nine miles from Tangier, and the messages only reached the *Galilée* in a very confused and unsatisfactory form. They led Ollivier and his officers to believe that a French squadron was on its way down the coast, and would arrive with the troops early on the following morning. Their error might have been made clear had not the *Du Chyala* been recalled to Tangier by the French Legation in order to carry fresh instructions to Casa Blanca. Her head was turned, and instead of making for Casa Blanca she made for Tangier, and lost touch with the signallers on the *Galilée*. Although there seems to be considerable doubt whether the officers of the *Galilée* ever really believed the squadron was due on the following morning, they telegraphed ashore to this effect, saying that at 5 A.M. on the morning of the 5th the squadron would arrive and “la force imposant” would land. Maigret immediately informed the foreign Consuls, and sent a letter to Moulai el Amin, telling him that the gates of the port must be thrown open, and if any resistance were offered to the landing-party, or if a single shot was fired, the warships would immediately bombard the town. For some reason or other this message did not reach Moulai el Amin till 4 A.M.

in the morning, one hour before the disembarkment was due. Great was the rejoicing among the Europeans, especially among the French, when the news spread that the hour of succour and revenge was at hand. That night few slept at the French Consulate, and the crowd of refugees sat up, eagerly searching the dark horizon of the ocean for the searchlights and signals of the expected warships. As the hours passed and no sign of them appeared, their joy changed to anxiety and still later to alarm. But their doubts were scattered when a sailor announced, with the unfailing instinct of a nautical man, that, far out in the ocean, he could see the frothy white foam of a mighty squadron hastening at full speed through the darkness. A cheer rent the air, for who among the loyal Frenchmen present would dare doubt the accuracy of the eye of a French sailor? But time slipped by, the squadron displayed no lights, the looming hulls became no clearer, and even the foam seemed to subside. The faith of many was shattered, and the sailor who had pledged his honour for their appearance slunk off to a more secluded spot to escape from the shame of a shattered reputation.

But if the garrison of the Consulate were disappointed at the non-arrival of the expected squadron, they saw another sight at five o'clock in the morning which aroused their curiosity and their alarm. As day broke three boats, towed by a steam pinnace, were seen to leave the side of the *Galilée* and make towards the shore. They were crowded with armed sailors. "Surely," many

were heard to ask, "they are not going to attempt to land with a small party like that?" Lieutenant Cosmé, who was in charge of the defence of the Consulate, explained the situation. "This," he said, "is a party sent ahead to clear the way for 'la force imposant'; no doubt the *Galilée* has heard that the squadron is arriving immediately, and desires to prepare the way for them." Maigret, on seeing the boats leave the *Galilée*, immediately despatched the interpreter of the Legation, Zajury, to show the sailors the road to the Consulate. Zajury went out alone and unarmed, and reached the Water Port unmolested. At the Water Port is a gate which is closed at night, and guarding this were three Moorish soldiers, placed there by Moulai el Amin. When they saw the sailors landing one of them whispered to his companion, "What are they coming here for? I don't like it." Zajury, who heard the remark, said in a loud tone of voice, "Keep quiet; we are going to do no harm."

The landing-party was under the command of Ensign Ballande, and as he jumped ashore he noticed the gate was in the act of being closed, and, pluckily rushing forward, shoved his arm between the folding-doors and forced them open with his shoulder. What happened next is not quite certain, but one of the Moorish soldiers let off his rifle—a very natural occurrence with them at all times, and especially likely to happen in the excitement of such a moment. Some say that a fanatical Moor, of the name of El Hayani, rushed up to the soldiers and shouted, "Close the door, and fire on these dogs of Christians!" An appeal

like this, coming at such a moment, was very likely to excite the impressionable minds of the Moors, and more shots were fired. One of these struck Ballande in the right arm as he was waving his sabre and calling upon his men to charge. The sword fell to the ground, but he seized it with his left and ordered his men forward. They rushed through the door and quickly shot or bayoneted the Moorish soldiers and any other unfortunates who happened to be looking on. From the Water Port to the French Consulate is a distance of only 250 yards, down narrow streets with four turnings, and there were two other guards of soldiers placed there by Moulai el Amin to protect the goods of the merchants. These men, hearing the shots, naturally loaded their rifles, and as the head of the French column appeared they directed an ill-aimed fire at it which did but little harm. Any other Moors who happened to be about, and who carried arms, also fired, thus adding to the general confusion, and two other Frenchmen were hit. Labaste, the second in command, was shot in the chest; and a sailor, who was wounded in the arm, subsequently suffered its amputation. But, apart from these three casualties, all the killing was done by the Frenchmen. There have been published in the French press graphic accounts of this little band of heroes forcing their way through the narrow streets, surrounded by thousands of savages, and being shot at from every window, wall, and housetop. But all this belongs to the realm of the imagination. The French having disposed of the soldiers, who offered

no resistance, killed every living soul they encountered along the 250 yards of narrow streets, and some sixty men, women, and Moorish children fell victims to their savage onslaught. In front of the French Consulate were drawn up a band of twenty-five Moorish soldiers who had been sent there by Moulai el Amin to assist in its defence. When the French sailors arrived in front of the gates another tragedy was only averted by the gallantry of Zajury the interpreter, who, rushing forward, flung himself between the sailors and the Moors, calling upon the soldiers to disperse if they did not wish to be killed. The latter wisely followed his advice and got away. At the sound of the first shot the gate of the Consulate was barricaded by its defenders with chairs, tables, pianos, and bedding, and it was some time before these obstructions could be removed and the rescue-party admitted, amidst the general rejoicing of the sorely frightened garrison. It had been previously arranged that in the event of an attack a signal should be shown from the Consulate for the *Galilée* to open her bombardment. This was immediately done, and it can be well imagined with what joy Ollivier and his crew saw the longed-for opportunity for which they had waited patiently for three years at last within their grasp. It cannot be said the French displayed much consideration for the remainder of the Europeans, for no warning was given them of what was about to take place, and whilst the French Consulate was securely guarded and defended by a garrison of seventy men, the houses and the Consulates of



the other nationalities were simply at the mercy of the fanatical mob, and undoubtedly would have been taken had not the Arabs been more intent on looting than on risking their lives in attack. At the British Consulate was Mr Madden, his wife, one or two others, and Mr Charles Hands, who had been hastily summoned to its shelter from the neighbouring Spanish hotel at four o'clock in the morning, when it was announced that the French really intended to land. Mr Madden, who kept his head throughout, and who displayed consummate coolness and judgment, did his best to collect his scattered colony of English under his immediate care, but the only arms which this little band possessed consisted of one rifle and a shot-gun. The other Consulates were equally unprepared and incapable of resistance. Twenty minutes elapsed after the signal had been given before the first shell from the *Admiral* was fired, which was the signal for one of the most deplorable orgies ever enacted. For three hours the cruiser bombarded the defenceless town, dropping her shells in all quarters, except the small section marked out by the Consular flags. The old Moorish fort was the first object selected, and few shells were required to knock it to pieces; but even before this was accomplished the Arab gunners managed to discharge one of their old smooth-bore cannon at the cruiser, the round-shot falling into the water with a splash long before it reached its mighty antagonist. The Mella was bombarded, the Arab quarter, and also the new enclosure, to which many of the Moors carried

their loot, believing it to be out of range of the guns. The horrible scenes which were enacted in the town will hardly bear repetition. The first shot was the signal to let loose a crowd of fanatics and vagabonds, who, taking no heed of the shells, went from house to house looting systematically, and carrying off every article that could be removed. As always happens on these occasions, it was the unfortunate Jews who suffered most. Many of them were killed, and thousands were carried off into the interior; many have never yet returned, and are now held as prisoners or have been sold as slaves all over Morocco.

It is impossible to describe all the horrors of what took place in the Mella and secluded streets of the town. The tale will never be fully told, but it can be easily imagined when one considers the character of the Moors, their hatred of the Christians, the contempt in which they hold the Jews, and their utter brutality when they no longer fear, and find the poor and the innocent at their mercy. One Jew saw his mother and father, his wife and children, slaughtered before his eyes; another had to watch his daughter violated many times in succession. The murders and the looting were not confined to the houses of the Christians and of the Jews. The wealthy Moors were also victims of their own countrymen's ferocity, and in the general confusion El Hammou seized the opportunity to carry off three of Moulai el Amin's most attractive wives. One or two incidents stand out as showing the peculiar character of the various nationalities in Morocco, and how even

the fear of death, when his house is falling about his ears, when his wife has been killed and his daughters carried off as concubines or slaves, the Jew cannot resist the opportunity of making money. One of them was found sitting in the street, as his home was in flames, picking up the empty cartridge-cases dropped by the Arabs, carefully refilling them, putting in stones for bullets, and reselling them to the hordes of ruffians who were oppressing and killing his countrymen. In the villa of Mr Murdoch, which I visited some days afterwards, the destruction was so complete that even the ivory had been stripped off the notes of the piano and the wires carried away. Not a chair or a table or a piece of pottery that had not been smashed to atoms, and anything that could not be removed had been wantonly destroyed. The paper had been stripped off the walls, the woodwork had been torn down, the windows smashed, the carpets removed, the flowers uprooted, and the tiles taken from the roof. The villa was first looted by the Moors, then by the townspeople, and afterwards the Foreign Legion and the Tirailleurs took anything that was left. I was gazing with wonder and disgust on the savage scene, when on the mantelpiece an object caught my eye, which alone had escaped the general destruction. It was a red book of great size and thickness, highly emblazoned, and the edges of the leaves covered with gold. I wondered what it could be, and why it had survived when all else had been destroyed. I picked it up, and found that it was an obsolete copy of 'Debrett's

Peerage'; and it was not until I saw this record of the House of Peers had been respected and had remained inviolate amidst these hordes of barbarians, that I fully realised the innate strength of the British Constitution, and how difficult it is to bring about a change.

Among the residents of Casa Blanca was a Spaniard called D——, who kept a hotel at which I stayed. This gentleman, a man of great courage and determination, whom rumour reported to have spent a year or two as a guest of the King of Spain at Cadiz, thought to turn the day of evil to his own advantage. He refused to leave his hotel as advised, and having a rifle and plenty of ammunition, he defended it throughout the siege with the utmost courage. He went on the principle that at such a crisis everybody who passed in the streets must be an enemy, and shot them on sight, and then rushed out to secure any spoils they might have about them. By this means he obtained quite a large amount of loot, and was also instrumental in causing the death of two of the oldest and most inoffensive and respected inhabitants of the town.

The bombardment lasted for three hours, and then a flag of truce carried by a Moor arrived at the French Consulate and was allowed to enter. He brought a message from Mr Madden, the British Consul, to M. Maigret, enclosing an appeal from Moulai el Amin, begging the French to stop the bombardment and put an end to the horrible proceedings. The Consulate signalled to the warship and the "Cease fire" was sounded. At 11

o'clock that morning the French cruiser *Du Chyala* arrived off the port, and immediately landed sixty-five men and a couple of guns, and later in the day the small Spanish cruiser *Alvarada de Bazan* also arrived and landed a party of twenty-five sailors, who took up their quarters in the Spanish Consulate. These were distributed at the Spanish Consulate, at the British, at the Austro-Hungarian, and at the house of Mr George Fernau, the acting Swedish Consul. These four buildings formed the *enceinte* of defence, and were the points necessary to occupy. In the afternoon Commandant Marzin, head of the police in Tangier, who had arrived in the *Du Chyala*, assumed command of the town, and was able to send patrols through the streets and to bring in several Europeans, and some of the Jews who had survived in the outlying houses. But still there was no sign of the expected squadron and of the troops. The Arab tribesmen outside the town, attracted by the bombardment, had hastened in thousands to obtain their share of the spoil; but many were kept back by the fire of the warships, which was effectively turned on them. As soon as it was dark the old scenes broke out afresh. The streets were again systematically looted until there was no longer anything left to carry away. The night of the 5th was full of horrors for the beleaguered parties in the Consulates; for many of the more determined Arabs, tired of looting or else finding the spoils already gone, commenced a systematic attack on the Europeans. A neighbouring saint house, or "marabout" as they are

called, was a favourite resort of the Moorish marksmen, and it was necessary to turn the guns on it too; but before this was done the consent of Moulai el Amin was courteously asked and readily agreed to, for the ire of the old Moor had been aroused by the looting of his own house. The third shell found its mark and knocked the top all to pieces, scattering the lurking marksmen therein. Throughout the night the garrisons were kept continually on the *qui vive*. Lieutenant Tessier, in charge of the British Consulate, received a shot in the leg, and several of his sailors were wounded. Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding, the nervous and excitable French sailors in the French Consulate commenced to fire on their comrades, who were holding Mr Fernau's house immediately below them, and before the mistake was found out they killed two of their own men and slightly wounded Mr Murdoch in the head.

Throughout the 6th the same state of anarchy prevailed in the town, and during that night even more systematic attempts were made on the Consulates. The French made continued sorties, and endeavoured to clear the streets in the vicinity of the Consulate, but such large numbers of Arabs were encountered, and so fierce was their opposition, that with the small number of sailors available it was impossible to make any headway. The situation during the night and early morning of the 6th again began to look serious, and the eyes of the defenders were eagerly turned seawards in hope of seeing the expected reinforcement. At 1 in the afternoon of the 7th the

French squadron at last arrived, and the Tirailleurs were immediately landed, and General Drude, his Chief of Staff, Tesson, and other officers came ashore, bringing with them M. Malpertuy, who hastened to his home, the French Consulate, to find it besieged, loopholed, bespattered with bullets, the furniture wrecked, the bedding being used for wounded, and everything topsy-turvy. From the moment of the arrival of the French troops all danger was at an end. General Drude made a minute inspection of the smoking streets, passed with his staff officers through the heaps of ruins, seized the town gates, had all looters and armed Arabs shot, and that same afternoon Casa Blanca was under his complete control.

From the 7th of August to the 18th the Chaouia tribesmen disappeared from the scene, and it was thought that, having destroyed the town and looted it, and having carried off the mass of the population, they would be content to rest on their laurels and not attack the French army in position. But their inaction during this period was due to other causes, and it was merely a case of "*reculer pour mieux sauter*" until they had replenished their supplies of ammunition and food and had safely disposed of the accumulated booty of the town. This respite of nearly two weeks was very fortunate, for it enabled more troops to reach Morocco and their energies could be devoted to clearing up the town, thus preventing some horrible pestilence which would have been speedily produced by the masses of decaying corpses of men and animals which encumbered every street. That

an outbreak of disease was avoided reflects great credit on the French administration, but undoubtedly they are chiefly indebted to the fierce rays of the African sun, which beats down with terrible severity in the summer months, and formed a better disinfectant than any ever invented by mankind. I shall not describe the condition of Casa Blanca during these days, but if the reader can imagine living on a smouldering ash-heap, surrounded by decaying bodies and under a tropical sun, he has a fair idea of what life meant to the soldiers, inhabitants, and visitors to Casa Blanca.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ARMY LANDS.

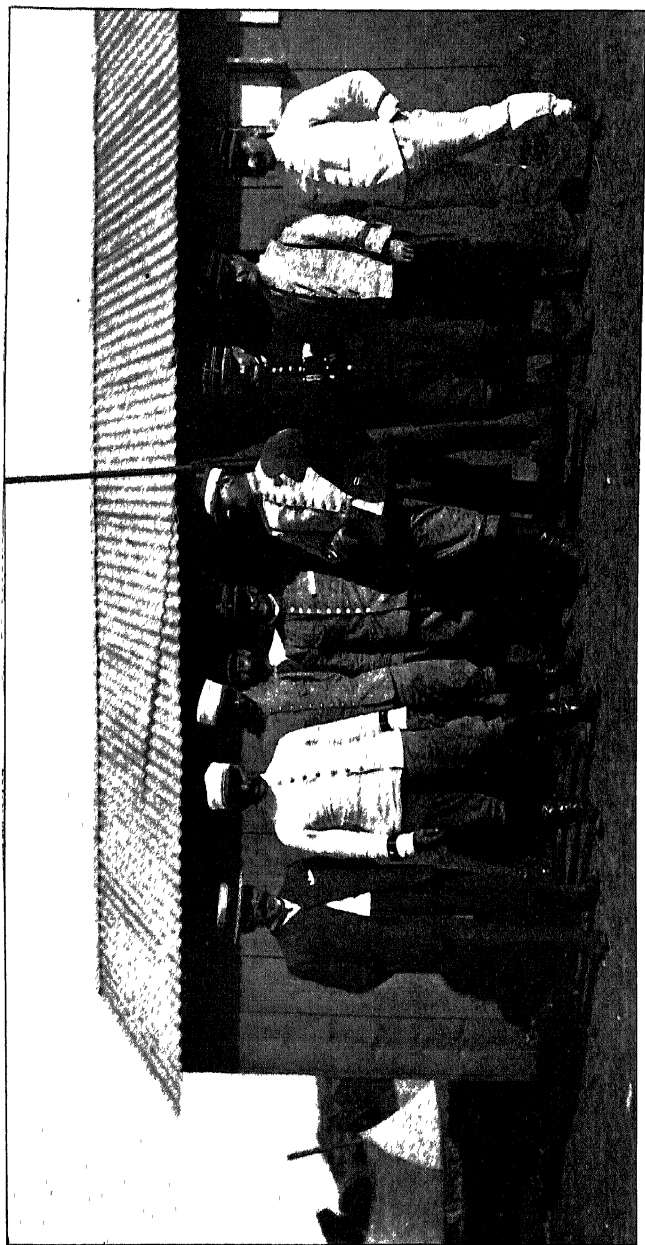
WHEN the first of the French troops landed at Casa Blanca on August 7, their mission was to restore law and order by clearing the streets of the gangs of marauding Arabs who, together with the town Moors, Jews, and the lower representatives of other nationalities, were roving about looting the property of all indiscriminately, and conveying the spoils to the country under an intermittent fire from the French warships. This task was accomplished almost automatically after the first detachment of the Foreign Legion had landed. The French general then took up a suitable position outside the walls, where, with the limited forces then at his disposal, he could best defend the town from attack. At first it was not thought that the outbreak would spread, or that the tribesmen from the interior would hurl themselves on an impregnable position held by a highly-trained army and the latest weapons of precision. Rather it was considered that, given time for reflection, the Arabs would regret their hasty outburst, and be only too willing to come to terms with the French.

But immediately after the disembarkment the whole aspect of affairs underwent a remarkable and dramatic change. The Arabs, when the town was at their mercy, soon began to quarrel amongst themselves over the distribution of the spoils, and many perished in these internecine conflicts. But the arrival of the army of the hated French quickly reconciled the looters, and at once cast the halo of a national struggle for existence over the sordid scene. Thus this little military parade, intended solely for the protection of life and property and the restoration of order, quickly developed into a military expedition from which the future historian will date the loss of Morocco's independence.

The operations I am about to relate cannot be described as belonging to the category of serious warfare, but they are interesting as throwing some light on the nature of the campaign France will be called upon to wage against the Moors in the future, and on the character of the men, both French and Arab, who will be opposed to one another.

The early operations of the army of Casa Blanca were purely of a defensive character, for strict orders were issued from Paris that no forward movement must be made, as France had only entered the country for the purpose of protecting lives and property of Europeans,—a rôle assigned to her and to Spain by the Act of Algeciras. The Arabs, therefore, took full advantage of the manner in which Drude's hands were tied, and delivered two general attacks on the town on

August 18 and August 21. Both were easily repulsed, but they served to show the desperate character of the resistance the Moors were prepared to offer. From the day of their landing the French were kept constantly on the alert, both by night and by day, to repulse the daring raids of small bands of Arabs on the suburbs. General Drude's original force was quickly found to be inadequate, and he was reinforced from Algeria until the following army was concentrated under his command: One squadron of Chasseurs d'Afrique, French cavalry enlisted especially for service in Algeria; one squadron of Spahis, native Algerian cavalry, having French officers in command; one hundred native Arabs of the Sahara, especially raised for service in the present war: they provide their own horses and have their own chiefs. On their arrival at the front each man was given a carbine and sabre, and three French officers were attached to command them in the field and to drill them in camp. Two field batteries, Nos. 12 and 18, of the latest pattern, quick-firers, capable of discharging twenty shots per minute: these two batteries were brought up to war strength by the addition of a section of mountain-guns carried on mules, four in all. In addition to the artillery there were four mitrailleuses, also carried on mules. The infantry consisted of six battalions of about eight hundred men each, three of the famous Foreign Legion, and three of Tirailleurs or Turcos, recruited from Algeria, and having native as well as French officers. The Foreign Legion is open



*General Drude and his Staff.*



to all nationalities, and a very large percentage of the men are of German extraction ; but almost every nation is represented in this splendid corps, possibly the finest and most serviceable troops in the world. Then there are engineers, hospital corps, and administrative departments, bringing the total up to a rough aggregate of five thousand nine hundred men of all arms. Later on reinforcements arrived, and a balloon was added.

I shall endeavour to describe in some detail the operations as I saw them. The French camp was placed outside the high walls of Casa Blanca on the south-east of the town, and, owing to the peculiar manner in which the sea-shore runs out into a peninsula, the lines almost entirely covered the town. There were three main fortified camps, and a series of fortified posts carried the *enceinte* of defence round to the north-east, where it again struck the sea-shore. At this point the Spaniards established themselves in a position where they were never likely to be attacked. The orders to the Spanish commander were strict. Under no circumstances was he to fire a shot against the Moors unless in self-defence, or unless the French commander called upon him for assistance. There were no hostilities between Spain and Morocco, and her small detachment of three hundred infantry, one hundred cavalry and details, were there solely for the purpose of policing the town, as provided by the Act of Algeciras. This situation was galling to a brave soldier commanding a most serviceable body of troops, for he and his men had to sit day after day listening to the

sound of the guns, hearing details of the fighting in every café and at every street corner, longing to claim their share of the glory and distinction which might accrue from it, but strictly barred by *la haute politique* from any intervention. The three main French camps were all situated on low ground, with a clear field of fire for a thousand yards or more up to the low ridge of hills which surround the town. These camps were carefully fortified by entrenchments and wire entanglements, and could thus be held by a small retaining force if the army was obliged to leave its base. They also were on ground so devoid of any natural protection that they would have been untenable against a foe who possessed artillery; but as the Arabs had no guns they were admirably adapted for their purpose. Great use was made of certain outlying houses and gardens, which were strongly fortified and strengthened by the presence of machine-guns. Inside these entrenchments were contained all the guns, horses, transport cavalry, and infantry lines. At first the camps were much exposed to snipers, but Drude's instructions permitted him to occupy the hills in his front, and the enemy were kept at a distance. In addition to the fortified lines the left flank of the French camp was covered by the guns of the *Gloire*. Wireless telegraphy connected the battleship with Drude's headquarters, and the first information of any movement of the Arabs in the interior was generally received from her. Outside, in the open roadstead which serves for a harbour at Casa Blanca, a fleet of transports constantly

arriving brought munitions and stores for the use of the troops.

In any account of the fighting round Casa Blanca, the front covered by the combatants, the amount of ammunition expended, and the number of those engaged must seem entirely out of proportion to the number of the casualties among the French. But this was due to the peculiar character of the fighting, to the good cover provided in the early engagements by the entrenchments, and the very great part played by long-range artillery-fire. As to the losses sustained by the Moors, it is impossible to arrive at anything like an accurate estimate, for the Arab will make any sacrifice to prevent his dead and wounded from falling into the enemy's hands. Consequently, if a man is hit by a small-bore bullet, and the shock is not sufficient to throw him from his horse, he rides rapidly out of action, leaning forward on and supported by the high peaks of the Moorish saddles. But this same man in a hot and dusty climate, without medical attendance, may shortly afterwards succumb to gangrene. The only trophies left on the field by the Arabs are dead horses, and a fair number of these were found, showing their losses had been considerable.

The methods of fighting in vogue among the Arabs are peculiar, and have departed in no way from the system of their Numidian ancestors. They ride up at a gallop to within as close a distance as possible of their enemy, fire from the saddle, then make off to some fresh vantage-point, loading without dismounting. Vividly are



recalled the pictures drawn by Tacitus of the Numidian hordes attacking Roman legions in the desert,—approaching at a gallop, discharging a cloud of arrows, and then making off like the wind before the slow-moving legionaries could attack them. This is the method the Arabs pursued against the French. It is certainly a trying ordeal for infantry, either on the march or in camp, to be constantly sniped at without ever having the opportunity to close with their opponents; and the French could never bring the Moors to a decisive engagement. But long-range rifles and modern artillery-fire have given an opportunity for retaliation which was never possessed by the Roman legionaries; and thus the game of coming within shooting distance, then riding off at full speed, no longer enjoys that almost complete immunity from danger which rendered it so delightful to the Numidian horsemen. This campaign was an object-lesson in the use of artillery against cavalry, and the two French batteries—Nos. 12 and 18—gained an experience which should be of the utmost value to both officers and men. In the early engagements Drude could make but little use of his infantry. He was forbidden by superior orders to pass beyond the confines of his camp and to undertake any offensive movement. His instructions were to defend the town, and he found his best means of carrying them out was by the fire of his field- and mountain-guns, assisted by those of the *Gloire*. I do not think the French ever anticipated the Arabs would

stand up against modern artillery-fire, and the manner in which they have done so commands the admiration of their opponents. At first the appalling roar, the disturbance to earth and atmosphere, and the terrible explosions of the great naval shells, must have put the fear of God into the hearts of the Mahommedan horsemen; but as invariably happens with shell-fire, a closer acquaintance with the results following each discharge gradually introduces the contempt of familiarity. For these naval shells exploding on soft ground only broke up into two or three large segments; and if one of these strikes you, your earthly troubles are at an end, but otherwise no great harm is done by its explosion in your neighbourhood. When the Arabs found this out their attacks on the camp became bolder. The arrival of the field-artillery made them more careful, for the French gun is a beautiful weapon, firing twenty shots per minute, and so accurately does the gun recoil without shifting the spade, that no fresh laying is required should the mark for all twenty be the same. But even the field-guns did not prevent the Arabs from attacking, and their horsemen repeatedly charged down on the French lines. It soon became evident that a campaign of passive resistance, sitting in camp to be shot at, and relying on the artillery to keep the enemy at a respectful distance, might be prolonged indefinitely; so with the consent of the diplomats in Europe the tactics were changed, and the French sallied forth to meet the enemy in the open.

## CHAPTER V.

## TWO ARAB ATTACKS.

THE position at Casa Blanca in August was that of a besieged city. The inhabitants suffered none of the hardships and privations of an invested fortress, for the seaboard remained open, and all necessary provisions could be brought in as desired. At first the mere sound of a gun was sufficient to bring every one on to the flat roofs of the houses to scan the sky-line; but after a month of incessant bombardment by day and the crackle of rifle-fire by night, it needed a very considerable engagement to arouse the inhabitants to enthusiasm. Those who remained in the town, and survived the disaster which had so suddenly overwhelmed it, seemed like people living in a trance, whom nothing could surprise. The sudden break in their peaceful lives, the awful events of those dark days from July 30 to August 7, left them stunned and ruined. Their homes were destroyed, their business at a standstill, and the labour of years undone. All wondered whether the country would ever settle down again to normal conditions, and allow the peaceful inhabitants to

make good their losses and resume their business with the interior. The trade of the coast towns of Morocco is entirely with the tribesmen, who come in to sell their grain and their vegetables, and to buy from the merchants their supplies of tea, coffee, sugar, salt, pepper, and a thousand other articles. The question has been asked, Why did the Arabs attack the French so persistently at Casa Blanca instead of moving down the coast and falling upon the undefended towns of Masagan, Mogador, or Safi? It was not the presence of the French warships at those ports which stopped them. The Arab rather despised the fire of the warship. "It is true," he says, "that the great guns destroy houses, ruin temples, and perhaps kill a few people, but what does that matter? directly the guns begin to shoot we have our opportunity to loot, with but small risk to ourselves." That was the Arab's opinion after a month's experience of naval shells. They did not attack the other towns, because they desired to keep these ports open for the disposal of their grain, vegetables, and other pastoral produce, and to purchase their supplies of sugar, coffee, and cotton. The closing of Casa Blanca inconvenienced them, but as long as Rabat, Masagan, Safi, and Mogador were open, the tribesmen were still able to secure all they required by going a little farther afield. Thus the same Arabs who attacked the French might a few days later be found peacefully parading the streets of other ports replenishing the ravages of war.

At 7.30 A.M. on August 18 the guns of the *Gloire* aroused the town. At first we thought it was merely the usual firing on casual groups of Arabs who approach the camp, fire a few shots, and then make off. But speedily it became evident that some bigger game was afoot. Shot after shot shook the houses, bringing every one up on the roofs, and soon the lesser roar of the mountain-guns and the crackle of rifle-fire were added to the din. I hastened out to the French camp to find every one on the alert. The trenches, at this time very shallow and providing but little cover, were filled with *Tirailleurs*, while behind them stood groups of officers in every conceivable costume, for the attack had come so suddenly that no one was properly dressed for parade. Little bands of Arabs kept appearing on the hills to our front, firing a few shots and then making off; but the range was great, and little harm was done. The best of the French marksmen were allowed to return this fire, and most of the officers seized the opportunity to lie down and try their skill. The chief interest was not in our immediate front, but to the left, close to the sea-shore, where half a squadron of *Spahis* were advancing. They moved forward for half a mile when the Arabs suddenly attacked them, charging right home. They almost cut off one man's head, and wounded several horses; whilst Captain Caud, the officer in command, had a narrow escape, for a shot was fired so close to his head that the powder actually burnt his eyes without, happily, inflicting any serious or permanent injury. In the face of superior numbers the

Spahis retired at a gallop, closely pursued by the Arabs, who behaved with great courage, for the guns of the *Gloire* and the mountain-guns in camp, as well as several naval guns landed for shore duty, burst shell after shell amongst them. Then comes the turn of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, who have been held in reserve. When they see the Spahis retiring they ride forward, check the retirement, and both Spahis and Chasseurs charged the Arabs together. The latter do not wait for the onslaught, but disperse, as is invariably the case with Arabs, and ride back behind the hills for cover, plied with shells and long-ranged rifle-fire. These pretty little cavalry manœuvres are carried out in full view of the camp, and the French officers around me are loud in their praises both of the bravery of their own men and of the Arabs. The Mella or Jewish quarter of Casa Blanca is situated just behind the French camp, and large numbers of Jews came out on the flat roofs to watch the proceedings, and shriek with joy every time a well-aimed shell lands in the middle of a party of their hated oppressors, the Arabs. They imagine, from their remarks, that every shell which bursts must kill hundreds, but in reality the loss is small, and very few riderless horses are seen to gallop away. The French cavalry do not follow up the Arabs, for their orders are strict; they retire down to the sea-shore to the shelter of some outhouses and gardens, and there await developments. It looks as if the fight is over, and that the Arabs have had enough, when suddenly a great cloud of dust rises up from behind

the hills on our left front. This can only be caused by mounted men, and General Drude, who is standing by the guns, orders them to open up on the dust. The first shell is a premature explosion, and bursts only a few yards in front, making the ground spurt with shrapnel bullets. A cry of disappointment arises from the crowded trenches, and the gunners, put on their mettle, land a beauty right over the dust, which begins to scatter. Shot after shot follows, and the *Gloire's* guns also open up until the hills are smoking. Soon the Arabs appear in full view, and again in increased numbers charge down upon the retiring French cavalry, endeavouring to penetrate the gap which separates them from the camp. Great excitement prevails when this new move is seen, and almost everybody is talking at the same time, until it is impossible to hear what orders are given, so the General holds up his hands and shouts out that there is too much noise. This excitement is natural, for the majority of officers and men have never been in action before, and war, especially when seen for the first time, is a game of absorbing interest. Meanwhile the Arabs develop an attack all round the camp to draw off the attention of the French from their main onslaught, which is directed on the left. Soon the infantry are able to open fire on the sharpshooters, some of whom leave their horses and creep forward into the open ground to snipe the camp. The Arabs are fine natural soldiers, and grasp a situation quickly, and they are commanded by men who thoroughly understand the science of war; for it is a fine move to endeavour

to isolate the cavalry and enter the outskirts of the town between the sea-shore and the lines. The General immediately grasps their intention, and sees it is an occasion for the employment of his infantry. He gives an order, and two companies of Tirailleurs rise from the trenches and dash forward to attack the Arabs in flank. The Tirailleurs, led by their officers, extend into long lines as they advance, until three or four spaces separate the men. Their movements are beautifully executed as if on parade; they halt, drop on the knee, and fire volleys at the word of command. The Arabs turn when they see the infantry advancing on their flank and gallop back, firing at us from the saddle as they retire. We have a fine target, but the shooting of the Turcos is very bad: they have no idea of distance; they are not particular as to whether they raise the leaf of their sights, and seem content to leave the result to Allah once they have pulled the trigger. The French soldiers, not able to grasp the intricacies of *la haute politique*, are very indignant with the Spaniards because the latter do not take their turn in the trenches, but remain in the town sitting outside the restaurants and sipping liqueurs. Thus, while the fight is in progress one hears on every side, “Où sont les Espagnols?” Just as the Tirailleurs go forward a bugle is heard from the town, and a wit among the French calls out to his comrades, “Voilà! le dîner des Espagnols est prêt.” This gibe is greeted with a general laugh. There are no restrictions put on one’s movements by the



French, and I was able to go forward with the Tirailleurs and watch their behaviour closely. Certainly they struck me as being admirable soldiers and extremely well handled, almost perfect, if only they would learn to shoot. The test was not severe: the Arab fire was ill directed, and only a few men were hit, one being killed, shot through the stomach. Directly a man is hit he is carried out of action in a peculiar manner, for there never seem to be any stretchers near the firing-line. Two men place their rifles parallel and bind them together with their long blue or red cholera belts made of cloth, which each man wears round his waist. Two others place their rifles crossways as an additional support. The dead or wounded man is then placed on this and carried out of action. It must be extremely uncomfortable, and is a wasteful extravagance, for four men are required to carry one man, while a fifth must walk by the side of this contrivance and hold him in place. Very often two or three others assist: thus for each wounded man some six or seven are taken out of the firing-line, whereas if stretchers were available two would be sufficient. The French are a very dramatic people, and in action always seem to have the right thing to say. Thus the sergeant-major of the Tirailleurs is extremely proud of the bearing of his men. He turns to me, pointing to the advance, and says, "La bataille, c'est leur jeu de fête." Their captain tells me that their great fault is too much eagerness, and that in action it is difficult to restrain them. As we advance the Arabs gradually retire,

and we have excellent targets of charging horsemen, but the shooting is so lamentably bad that little harm is done. Suddenly a party of Arabs charge the left of our line from the hills in front. This is our exposed flank, and a shout warns us of their onslaught. The captain wheels round half a company to meet them. The men fire steady volleys, which the Arabs do not care to face, for they turn and retire under a tremendous fire from the guns, but with little loss; in fact, any one who imagines that modern weapons have rendered the employment of cavalry an impossibility on a modern battlefield would have his theories grievously upset by seeing the immunity from harm which the Moorish horsemen enjoy. Except for unbroken infantry, it seems to me that cavalry can charge almost everything else, especially guns in position; for time and time again the Arabs have charged quite close to the new French field-gun, which can fire twenty shots per minute, without suffering hardly any loss, so difficult has it been to pick up the quickly changing mark. Of course an occasional well-aimed shell may inflict enormous destruction, but these are few and far between, and the majority are just too far, or not quite far enough, or a little to one side, to inflict any damage. It was a thousand pities that neither Russia nor Japan possessed any cavalry worthy of the name who could have played a rôle in the great conflict in Manchuria, and thus have given us an object-lesson as to exactly what cavalry can perform under modern conditions without being wiped out. Certainly mounted

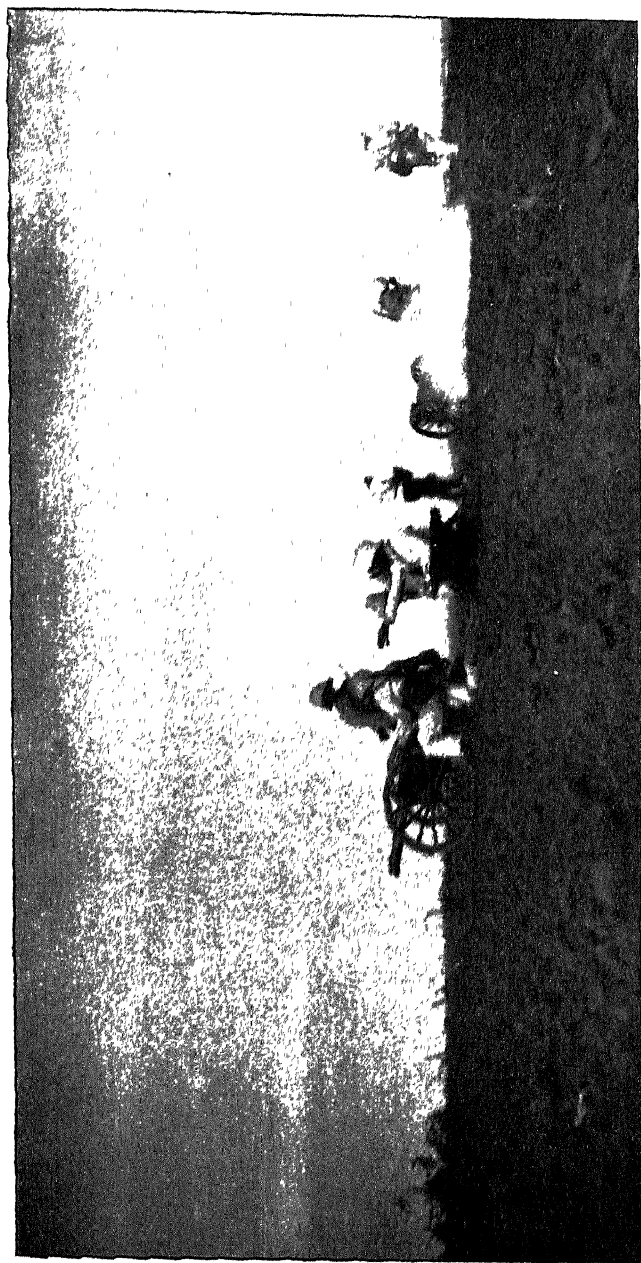
infantry should be the great aim of the future, for it has been proved out here that masses of mounted men can gallop from position to position under shells from warships, shrapnel from field- and mountain-guns, mitrailleuses and rifle-fire, with comparatively little loss, whereas slow-moving infantry would have been destroyed covering the same ground. If only the Arabs were decently and uniformly armed and trained to dismount and shoot from cover once a position is obtained, instead of wandering aimlessly about firing from the saddle, they would inflict great loss on the French, who are obliged to remain in square in fixed positions.

The Tirailleurs continued to advance until they reached the foot of the hills in front. Here we found cover and lay down to exchange shots with the Arabs on the crest. The captain wanted to advance and rush the top, hoping to catch the enemy on the other side, but again *la haute politique* intervenes in the shape of an A.D.C., who rides up at the gallop with strict orders that we are to go no further. So here we remain, the Tirailleurs very disappointed, for they are eager to attack. A little later General Drude himself rides up, inspects the line, then moves off to visit the cavalry. Soon there comes an order for us to retire on the camp by half companies. This movement is carried out in echelon from the left. One half company retires a hundred yards, then halts, and so on down the line. The Arabs have had enough, and make no effort to molest the retreat, but this does not prevent precautions from being taken.

Whenever they halt the Tirailleurs throw up entrenchments with their bayonets, which can be used on some future occasion. By 11 A.M. every one is back in camp extremely satisfied with the day's outing, for most have enjoyed the novel sensation of being under fire for the first time, and now each man feels he is a veteran.

On August 20, without any previous warning, the second of the picturesque Arab assaults was delivered on Casa Blanca. At 10 A.M. a horde of mounted Arabs surrounded the town and commenced to fire on the camp and outworks. The attack was pressed home on all sides with superb courage, and was an object-lesson in the use of cavalry against artillery. Under a tremendous fire from the warships, and from the field-guns, mountain-guns, and mitrailleuses, the Arabs rode boldly over the hills surrounding the town and advanced into the plain. Here some of the more determined and fanatical left their horses, and creeping forward commenced to snipe at close quarters. The attack, however, seemed to fade away, for the Arabs could not advance in the teeth of the fire from the warships. General Drude then sent forward a company of Tirailleurs to clear the hills in front. They advanced in open formation, led by their captain, sword in hand, and were supported by another company in reserve. The Moors opened an ineffective fire from the crest of the ridge, but were obliged to abandon it under a shower of shrapnel. The French infantry then occupy the ridge, and Drude sends forward two mountain-guns and two com-

panies of the Foreign Legion. When the mountain-guns reach the crest they open a very effective fire on the Moors, who retire and begin to concentrate near the sea-shore, regardless of the big shells from the *Gloire*. There are some men who stand out in ancient and modern warfare as having charmed lives. Prince Murat was one, the Cid another, the Black Prince a third. Murat always charged at the head of the cavalry in a most conspicuous uniform, yet he passed through twenty years of campaigning without receiving a scratch. The prototype to Murat amongst the Arabs was the famous Red Caid—so called because he always wore a red *jellab*, which made him a most conspicuous object amongst the white robes of his followers. He first sprang into prominence during the attack three days before, but it was on this occasion that he first displayed those qualities of heroism which have made him famous. He rallies the wavering horsemen and leads them down in a solid body on the French infantry lining the ridge. But the concentrated fire of the guns is too much for them, and they break—riders, men on foot, loose horses,—scattering in all directions, and scurrying hither and thither to escape the hail of shrapnel. Now it is that the Red Caid gives one of these exhibitions of personal courage and immunity from danger which have made his name mythical in Arab warfare. He refuses to retire with the rest, but stands boldly out on the sky-line calmly firing his rifle at the French infantry, who try to bring him down. Great



*French Mountain-Guns in Action.*



shells from the *Gloire* tear up the ground around him, and little white puffs of smoke above his head show where the shrapnel are bursting; but nothing can touch this remarkable warrior. He stands for some minutes alone on the battlefield facing the enemy, then, seeing his followers have scattered and that further efforts are useless, he turns his horse's head and rides slowly away amidst a chorus of praise and congratulations from his chivalrous Gallic foe. That afternoon we see a further example of Arab heroism, or indifference to danger. After the Moors have retired, a white-robed figure advances alone and on foot across the ground over which the Moors have just charged. His object is a white horse lying within 500 yards of the French infantry, who open a very heavy fire on this solitary warrior. But of this he takes not the smallest notice. He reaches his horse and proceeds quietly to remove the saddle. Two other mounted Arabs now appear, and make a show of charging so as to draw the fire of the infantry. When the saddle was removed, all three retire unscathed amidst bursting shells and whizzing bullets.

The horsemen having disappeared, we think the fight is at an end, when suddenly tremendous cries arise from the camp. From the hills near the sea-shore a great mass of Arabs suddenly descend, and, entering the valley, they charge boldly down on the French infantry lying in the open. The Red Caid is again at their head. Here was a spectacle seldom seen in warfare,—cavalry charging infantry and guns in a forlorn endeavour to



equalise the advantage gained by modern weapons. The Arabs ride down on the French infantry and present a target such as gunners pray for but seldom get—namely, a mass of cavalry over a thousand strong charging in close formation only 1500 yards away. Every gun on land and sea expresses its approval by opening up on the charging throng, and the ground over which they pass resembles a volcano in active eruption. But the Arabs come straight on, hardly losing a horse or a man. Some of the shells burst short, some too far, others just to one side, and a malignant fatality seems to misguide the gunner's steady hand. The soldiers in the camp are very disappointed, and so are the Jews, who have come out on the roof of the Mella, and they express their disapproval with loud lamentations. Suddenly a great shell from the *Gloire* bursts right in their centre, and many horsemen fell. Some rise and stagger away, leaving their horses on the ground; but many men and horses rise no more. But this disaster does not check the Arab charge. They press on until they come within 400 yards of the infantry, who pour in steady volleys, assisted by the fire of the mitrailleuses. But the horsemen can go no farther. They have ridden for over a mile under a heavy fire, and their horses are spent. The mass of white wavers, and then breaks like spray on the sea-shore as the riders disperse to avoid the bursting shells. Again the Red Caid came on alone as if courting death; but again he escaped without so much as a scratch. He watched his followers ride slowly back down

the valley, and then he himself follows them—the last to leave the field. The artillery continued to ply the flying horsemen with shrapnel until the last of them had vanished. The fight on this side of the town was over. Towards the west the Moors made another attack on the ruined houses and gardens, and tried to enter the town. The guns were turned in this direction, the trenches blazed with rifle-fire, and the same tale of reckless heroism thrown away against modern weapons was repeated. “When will they tire of this stupid game?” I hear a French officer remark; and I think the same thought was uppermost in the minds of us all.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE FIGHT IN THE SQUARE.

ON August 28 the French took the offensive for the first time at Casa Blanca. A force composed of two companies of the Foreign Legion, two field-guns, one squadron of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and the Goumiers, the native Algerian Arabs, left the camp to make an extensive reconnaissance to discover, if possible, whether the Arabs had retired after their repulse on August 21. The troops were under the command of Commandant Provost of the Foreign Legion, an excellent soldier and charming companion. No correspondents accompanied the reconnaissance, as we had no previous intimation of the General's intentions.

The French camp left at 1 o'clock, and about 2 P.M. the sound of the *Gloire's* guns roused the slumbering town from its afternoon siesta and warned us that the enemy had been sighted. Colonel Lewis, the correspondent of 'The Times,' and myself, walked out to the camp, expecting to find the *Gloire* was firing on some isolated groups of horsemen. But when we reached the camp a very heavy rifle-fire told us the infantry were

engaged. We could see nothing, for the range of hills which encircles the town completely hid the combatants. On the sky-line the French vedettes, composed of the Spahis, were riding to and fro, occasionally firing from the saddle. Soon the rifle-fire came nearer, and the vedettes left the ridge and came down into the valley nearer the camp. We decided to walk out to the ridge, hoping to see what was taking place. Unfortunately at this time our horses had not arrived from Tangier and we were on foot. Half-way across the open ground we met one of the Spahis, who explained he had retired because he had fired all his cartridges. We asked if we could join the troops, but he replied it was unsafe, because the Arabs had penetrated between them and the camp. We were therefore reluctantly obliged to return. However, a renewal of the heavy firing again aroused our interest, and meeting just outside the camp Nodeau, the able correspondent of the 'Journal,' and Bourdon of the 'Figaro,' Hubert Jacques of the 'Matin,' and one or two others, we all decided to go together. Half-way across we met a party of five Goumiers supporting a wounded companion on his horse, and bemoaning his sad fate in a harrowing if somewhat comical fashion. From their manner one would have thought the day had gone sorely against them; but the Arab is very emotional, and always gives way to his grief when one of his friends is killed or wounded. As we neared the ridge a large party of Goumiers appeared on the crest. They were firing indiscriminately from the saddle, aim-

ing apparently at any living object within the field of vision, and when no objective was in view, they fired their short carbines towards the sky. However, we were very glad to find ourselves amongst allies and friends, for the Arabs were attacking the Goumiers on both flanks, and threatening to close in behind them and the camp. But our pleasure was short-lived, for the danger from the enemy's bullets, now flying freely around, was as nothing compared to the alarm caused by the reckless fire of the Goumiers. Also they began to be very unsteady under the cross-fire from both flanks, and to show signs of breaking up and dispersing towards camp. Large parties of Arabs were galloping parallel to our flanks, firing from the saddle at the Goumiers, and then making off to some fresh point to escape the fire of the *Gloire's* guns and also those of the French artillery in the camp. To our front we could hear but could not see the infantry and field-guns firing very rapidly, showing they also were heavily engaged; in fact, wherever one looked, large numbers of white-robed warriors were swarming over the surrounding hills, appearing for a moment and then vanishing, to reappear at some fresh point. Our position with the Goumiers became every minute more unpleasant, and we longed for a view of the infantry. Our worst fears were realised when the Goumiers split up into small parties and rode back towards camp, in spite of the endeavours of their officers to check them. They cannot be blamed for their conduct. This was the first time they had been

engaged, and they are not accustomed to act in cohesion with other arms or to stand massed together under a heavy fire. We, the press of Europe, found ourselves in the unfortunate predicament of being stranded in the middle of a ploughed field, with the Arabs in front on either flank and some almost in our rear, while we were without horses and without arms, and thus had no chance of escaping from our mobile foes. It was an unpleasant moment for us all, and I would have given any sum for the worst horse that ever stood on three legs at that moment. One Goumier was going off with a led horse, the property of a dead or wounded comrade, and I tried to make him understand that a mount would be peculiarly agreeable and acceptable. But he was obdurate; he would not let me climb into the high-peaked saddle, and digging his long spurs into his horse's flanks was soon out of ear-range of the abuse I hurled after him. We could go neither to the right nor to the left, nor yet back to the camp, therefore only one alternative remained, and that was to try and reach the French infantry in our front. We ran laboriously but with the speed of fear under the tropical sun across the ploughed fields, and saw to our great delight, about 300 yards away, two companies of the Foreign Legion formed into a hollow square, and retiring in this formation on the camp. They had with them two field-guns. The Arabs now appeared and made a move as if to charge home, so the square was halted and the men fired volleys to keep the daring horsemen at a distance. The guns un-

limbered and commenced to ply them with shrapnel, which caused the groups to split into twos and threes, thus rendering the mark small and difficult to pick up. Some of the Arabs dismounted, and taking advantage of the cover provided by the ground in our front, commenced to snipe the square and gun teams most effectively. One of the French guns was admirably served, but the other was not so accurate, because the officers in charge did not keep cool. The gunners were constantly obliged to shift their positions, and in the excitement sometimes fired almost over the tails of the teams, the discharges terrifying the horses and making them very restive. The teams crowded together were the favourite mark for the Arabs, and considering the heaviness of the fire it was remarkable more men were not hit. The riders knelt down behind their horses, thus obtaining some cover; and the gunners, considering they were young soldiers under fire for the first time, behaved with great steadiness. We remained with the guns about a quarter of an hour; but as the Arab attack showed no sign of weakening, and as there seemed to be more men armed with good rifles than on any previous engagement,—judging from the sound of the bullets, they were all heavy-bore rifles, Martinis, Gras, and Remingtons,—the guns were ordered to retire to the ridge 300 yards behind, from where they would have a better field of fire. They limbered up very quickly under a heavy fire and cantered back to the ridge, upon which the Goumiers, who had been rallied by the Chasseurs,

had reappeared. Colonel Lewis and myself now entered the square, and were glad to find ourselves surrounded on all sides by lines of steady infantry. The behaviour of the men was admirable: they never became excited or fired wildly, and all their movements were carried out with parade-like precision. The retirement of the guns to a better vantage-point was evidently regarded by the Arabs as a success, for they attacked the square more boldly than ever, some of them approaching within 300 yards, and for half an hour the firing was very warm; but as every man is worth his weight in lead but few were hit, although every bullet seemed to land in the centre of the square or just outside it. It is really extraordinary how many bullets are required to kill or even wound a man, but the loose formation adopted, and the order given to the men to lie down, saved many casualties. The officers remained standing. Commandant Provost had dismounted, so had all the other officers, except de Kervanoel, the General's A.D.C., who remained seated on his horse. I heard an animated dispute between Provost and de Kervanoel as to whether it was right for an officer to remain in the saddle under fire. The Commandant maintained it was absurd. This discussion at such a moment was truly French. Most French officers stand up under fire when their men are lying down. This is certainly a mistake, and quite unnecessary with such excellent troops as the Foreign Legion. It may set a good example to native troops who are inclined to be unsteady, but



no encouragement or example is needed by the Tirailleurs. It does not matter so much against an enemy like the Arabs; but, as we learnt to our bitter cost, it led to disastrous results against good shots like the Boers, who would speedily have picked off every mounted man and horse. Besides, the majority of men do not care to have an officer standing up behind them, for it draws fire to their vicinity, and they themselves may be the victims of another's rashness.

As soon as the artillery had taken up its new position on the ridge, Provost retired the square 100 yards to more favourable ground, where it again halted and faced the enemy. This retirement under a heavy fire was admirably carried out, the formation never being lost. The Arabs then came so close that it really looked as if they intended to charge home, but such methods are not to their liking, and cold steel is abhorrent to them. The effective fire of the artillery and the huge explosions of the *Gloire's* shells kept them at a respectful distance, though their courage was superb. Often groups would halt to breathe their horses under the fire of the guns. Many must have been hit, but all the dead and wounded are carried away: the number of dead horses counted after the fight bore eloquent testimony to the accurate fire of the guns. The Foreign Legion must be numbered among the coolest of troops, and seem really to enjoy an action, the hotter the better; for being composed for the most part of adventurers of all nations, these very qualities which have earned for them a certain

reputation in times of peace command the admiration of all in times of war. Whenever a bullet came near a man he would take off his hat, make a sweeping bow, and exclaim, "Bonjour, mademoiselle." In the middle of the fight a Spahi orderly came up to Commandant Provost, and asked permission to leave the square, saying he would return shortly, his excuse being that he had run out of cartridges. "How many have you fired?" said the Commandant. "Seventy-five," was the reply. "Then that is enough for one afternoon," answered the gallant Provost. The Spahi retired disconsolately to remain a spectator.

The French troops are trained never to use their magazines except in moments of absolute necessity. There are many officers who believe the magazine is an unnecessary encumbrance. Unlike the Mauser and Mannlicher, the Lebel is a single loader, the cartridge being contained in no clip. The eight cartridges are inserted singly, and are contained in a second barrel, not in a magazine, following the Winchester system, a cut off enabling them to be preserved until required. I do not think the rifle is a good one although the trajectory is low; and the men say the sighting is very accurate. The magazine is very apt to jamb, and is hard to mend. I have frequently heard men exclaiming in action, "Mon fusil ne marche plus." It is very slow work charging the magazine, but this does not matter so much, as it is hardly ever used.

While the main body attacked the square a party of Arabs rode round the left flank, and

in spite of a heavy fire from the *Gloire's* guns advanced towards the enemy. But this move was only a feint, and died away when the mitrailleuses got to work. At 4.30 General Drude sent out three companies of Tirailleurs and the Spahis to Provost's assistance, and to cover his retirement on the camp. This force came into action on our left flank, and its heavy fire soon showed the Arabs how futile were their efforts. At 5 P.M. they commenced to retire on all sides. The square then broke up into sections, and in this formation retired on the camp, covered by the guns, and protected by the Goumiers, who spread out over a wide front to search for the body of one of their comrades who was killed and left with the enemy. He was found with his head almost severed from his body, for such is the barbarous custom of the Arabs. It was generally considered that the reconnaissance had anticipated another general attack on the camp. The Arab losses were heavy, especially in horses, according to reliable reports which reached the General and others from the interior.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE SORTIE.

ON September 3 General Drude set out with a strong force to feel the enemy, and to discover what strength they could bring against him in the field. He wished to parade the French arms in the enemy's country away from the camp, and to prove to them that he was capable of fighting out of range of the *Gloire's* guns.

The modern general who commands an army is at a disadvantage compared to his predecessors of the pro-correspondent days, for he not only has the enemy to contend with, to outwit and to defeat, but also a crowd of war writers, who, like vultures round a corpse, gather to pick up news. General Drude was always most considerate in his relations with the press; but when the numbers at Casa Blanca swelled to such unwieldy dimensions that they threatened to absorb his own weak battalions whenever they took the field, he began seriously to consider the advisability of allowing them to accompany his army. Those who were properly accredited, and who had received the permission of the War Minister in Paris to take

the field, were naturally in a different position to the crowd of irregulars attracted to the spot through love of adventure. General Drude therefore adopted the plan of never announcing beforehand his intention. It was left to all to find out, and those who were successful reaped the spoils of their enterprise. But the majority of mankind have no inclination or aptitude for rising at 4 A.M. without knowing definitely if anything is to happen, and the press of Europe was generally left peacefully slumbering in the town while the legions of France ploughed their weary path across the plains of Morocco. (On the night of September 2 Colonel Lewis and I received a friendly hint that something of interest was to take place on the following morning, and that an early start would be made. The objective was a ridge of hills about eight kilometres from the town, called Sidi Moumein, rendered conspicuous by three little "marabouts" or saint houses. Our course would be along the sea-shore, and the expedition was intended merely as a reconnaissance, but being the first forward movement on a serious scale it was of especial interest. Accompanied by Colonel Lewis, the able and supremely energetic special correspondent of 'The Times,' who, after a long and most distinguished career in the Egyptian army, embracing the final triumph of Omdurman and the death of the Khalifa, has now resigned the sword for that more potent weapon the pen, I reached the camp at 5 A.M. on September 3. The lines were full of life and animation, and the cavalry, infantry, and artillery

were moving off. At the camp I met the General, who was just giving his final instructions to his commanders. He told us briefly of his plans, the route he would take, and the objective he had in view. He was going to advance on Sidi Moumein in two squares in echelon, left shoulder, that nearest the sea forward, to try and make the Arabs believe his camp was only defended by a very weak force, and thus encourage them to attack it. If they fell in with his plans he could sweep inland across the front of the camp and endeavour to cut them off from their base at Taddert. Naturally, with his slow-moving infantry, he could not expect to surround the enemy or force him to surrender, but he hoped to inflict severe losses.

The troops moved out of camp in square, the faces marching in column of sections with guns in the centre, and the cavalry scouting ahead and on either flank. Each French infantry company is composed of nominally 250 men on its war footing, but none of Drude's battalions were up to full strength. Many men have been left behind in Algeria, and it has not been possible to place more than 150 men per company in the field. The advance force consisted of the Goumiers, the Spahis, Algerian Cavalry, half a battalion of the Foreign Legion, under their gallant commandant Provost; half a battalion of Tirailleurs, and one battery, the Twelfth, of Field Artillery. This force was under the command of Colonel Blanc. About two miles from camp the infantry, who had been moving in column of sections, deployed into

one huge square, while the Goumiers and Spahis, who had been leading the advance, fell away to either flank, to leave a free field of fire for the infantry in case of sudden attack. Behind the first square came the second, an interval of about two miles separating the two; this was of equal strength, being composed of half a battalion of the Legion, half a battalion of Tirailleurs, the 18th Field Battery, and two mitrailleuses mounted on mules. This square was in rear and to the right of Blanc's, and was under the command of Colonel Brulard. Thus, with the camp farther in rear and to the right of Brulard, the three formed an echelon, with the left shoulder thrown forward close to the sea, the camp being left invitingly open as the troops moved rapidly forward. As the sun rose the scene was very picturesque, for the French troops wear such gay uniforms that campaigning with them makes war something like what it was a century ago, when every warrior took the field in scarlet or blue with gold and silver facings. In the centre of Blanc's square rode a fat town Moor mounted on a mule, and by his side there waddled a captured Arab of the district to act as guide. This man looked the picture of misery, evidently being greatly afraid of the Spahis who guarded him, and who occasionally urged him forward by a prick of the sabre. The French infantry have always been famous for their marching powers, and the manner in which the Legion and the Tirailleurs covered the rising, stony ground was remarkable. There was no intention of staying

out for the night, so the men marched light, only carrying their haversacks, water-bottles, rifles, and cartridges,—a sufficient load in a hot climate, but as nothing compared to the colossal pack—weighing over sixty pounds and extending far above their heads—which they are wont to bear on campaign. After an hour's march the square halted on some rising ground for a brief rest, and the officers foregathered to discuss the situation and to surmise what would happen. Among the first to greet me was Commandant Provost, the kindest and most genial of men. Who could realise he was leading his beloved legion into action for the last time? I have never seen a more peaceful aspect than the horizon presented that beautiful summer's morning, and it was difficult to believe the country was ravaged by war, or that thousands of Arabs were ready to spring upon our column, for not a man was to be seen and not a shot was fired. The lines of hills to our front, and those to our right, were absolutely devoid of life. The country round Casa Blanca is not very prepossessing, but it has a certain grandeur of its own. It is not unlike South Africa, but the hills are not so high, and do not spring suddenly from the veldt without gradual ascents as in that country. The prevailing colour is dark grey; and the terrain over which we were passing was very rough and covered with loose stones, except where the fields had been cleared for cultivation. The going is very bad for the horses' feet, but the Barbs and Arabs carry you



over the broken ground very rapidly, placing their feet with great skill. A European cavalry regiment would soon knock up its horses, and it could never canter over the ground like the Arabs.

After a brief halt the square again moved forward, but still without meeting with any opposition. We began to feel afraid we were to draw blank, and that our march was to be devoid of incident—a mere fatiguing prelude to an ignominious return to camp. Suddenly, just when our spirits were at their lowest ebb, a single shot rang out to our right, and an Arab horseman showed himself boldly on the sky-line. The Goumiers hurried forward, but he was gone as mysteriously as he had come. But he had merely retired to warn his companions, for soon half a dozen began to exchange shots with the Goumiers, who returned the fire, keeping the enemy at a distance, and allowing the square to continue its stately measured advance without molestation. We now began to climb the last rise to the “marabouts” at Sidi Moumein, our destination. On the top we halted, and the men lay down in the ranks, the square keeping its formation with the guns, out of range of snipers, just below the crest-line. But the hills around us were still deserted, and again we thought our morning wasted. We searched everywhere, not seeing any enemy, and attempted to console ourselves by admiring the scenery. A mile to the right of the ridge—we were halted about 600 feet above the sea-level—

lay the blue Atlantic; our front was covered by another chain of hills, from 800 to 1000 yards away, with a valley between; to our right the slope fell away to a neck of low foot-hills; and still farther on, over four miles distant, a number of Arab tents were scattered about, but apparently also deserted. Behind us lay Casa Blanca, simmering in the sun like some great jewel against the dull grey of the landscape. A Moorish city seen from a distance, when only the bold outline is in the perspective, and the dirt, squalor, and bad smells are all forgotten, is an impressive, even majestic sight. The square white houses with their flat roofs, the uniform architecture, and absence of all smoke rising above the towns, render them almost celestial, and bring back to memory the days of Fatima and tales of the Arabian Nights.

We were not left long to admire our surroundings, for they were interrupted in just the manner we all so much desired. A joyful shout from a group of Tirailleurs to our front proclaimed some discovery, and on the hills opposite our front several groups of Arabs came to view. Soon others appeared all along the sky-line, and the hills sprang to life with that magic quickness of mobilisation peculiar to the Arabs. The first bullet whistled over the heads of Colonel Blanc and his staff who were standing up exposed to full view. "Voilà! un peu de musique," he exclaimed, then ordered the guns to the front. The officers hurried off to their respective stations, and

in a minute the gun-teams are galloping across the stony ground, in another they have unlimbered all four in line, with the gun-caissons tilted over to provide cover, and the bronze cases of the seventy-two shells carried in each caisson sparkling in the sun. The order is given to fire, and the first sighting shell speeds on its way. The French carry no common shell with which to pick up the range; they judge it by eye, and if unable to get on the mark accurately, they fire a shrapnel on to the ground, the shell exploding on contact. Now the hills around us are alive with galloping Arabs, who fire from the saddle at the splendid mark presented by the guns. Colonel Blanc orders the teams and all led horses below the crest-line, where they obtain good cover as long as the shooting is directly from our front. The artillery have some splendid targets, and take full advantage of them, firing with extreme speed and accuracy, for the conditions are favourable, the light being specially good, and the crests of the hills stand out plainly. The stream of shells breaks up the Arabs into groups, and some of the best marksmen with long-range rifles, seeing it is useless to gallop to and fro under such a hail of bullets, dismount, and, carefully selecting cover, snipe the square. These marksmen become daily more efficient, and cause nearly all the casualties in the French ranks. They discover a group of officers or a line of infantry with an officer standing up behind them, and place themselves directly in front of the party. Then they aim,

and fire very deliberately and slowly, sometimes sending their bullets too high and sometimes too low, and often knocking the dust into the eyes of the men. It is trying work facing these marksmen, for the smoke of their large-bore rifles is plainly visible, and one wonders where the bullet is going to land as it comes screeching by. To keep down this fire the French fire deliberate volleys, or select one or two of their best shots to return it. I saw a good example of the number of bullets it requires to kill or wound a single man. Two Arabs on foot got up within about 700 yards of a line of Tirailleurs, and ran for shelter over some ploughed fields towards some gardens. Every man in the half-company blazed away at them for fully five minutes, and yet both escaped unharmed. The long-range fire of the French native troops is very poor and ineffective. Directly the engagement became general large numbers of Arabs appeared coming from the direction of the tents to our right; some of these men joined in the attack on Blanc's, but others rode towards Brulard's column, evidently intending to pass across its front and attack the apparently deserted camp. Soon Brulard's artillery came into action, and also the mountain-guns on the crest before the camp, the engagement extending over a front of nearly six miles; but the main body continued to assail Blanc's square. All the initiative was with the Arabs, and their extreme mobility enabled them to be everywhere masters of the situation. To our right the hill sloped down into a low neck, and this a party of

daring horsemen galloped to seize. The Foreign Legion were in this quarter, and Commandant Provost, grasping the situation, pushed one company steadily forward, firing volleys to check the movement.

We had been engaged for about an hour, when suddenly the centre of interest shifted to the left flank. Between the left face of the square, which should have rested exactly on the crest of the hill, and the sea, was a flat strip of ground a mile or a mile and a half in width. Several hundred of the best mounted Arab horsemen rode across the front of the square under cover of the hills, and then sweeping into view passed in a solid mass at full speed over the narrow strip of plain which separated us from the sea. They had chosen their opportunity very skilfully, for the four field-guns, which might have played sad havoc with them, were all facing south on the other side of the hill firing at isolated groups, and could not be brought to bear without changing front. But this solid body of over four hundred horsemen should have been an admirable target for the French infantry lying down within a few hundred yards of them. But not a shot was fired; and why? The men were not properly on the crest line—a mistake which has led to so many disasters in war—and could not see what was happening beneath them. Thus the Arabs passed the left face of the square, and almost placed themselves between Blanc's column and that of Brulard, two miles behind. Finally, they came under the fire of the rear face, composed of Tirailleurs and

Goumiers, who opened up a long-ranged and ineffective fire, which was returned from the saddle. Colonel Blanc and his staff were standing just behind the Goumiers and saw all that was taking place, yet they made no effort to push forward the infantry on the left flank to the true crest, or even to bring over the guns from the other side of the hill. In fact, all through the engagement there seemed to be a great lack of control and little initiative. Probably the company of officers had strict injunctions, and could not leave their positions to take up more favourable ground without orders. That is one great objection to the square formation, for if one face moves out of the alignment to better ground, it is likely to leave the flank of the others exposed. But any commander, seeing how badly his infantry was placed on the left flank, should have pushed his men forward. Finally, it seems to have occurred to some one that a grand mark for the artillery was being missed, and a message was sent to bring over one of the guns. This was done by hand, and was slow and troublesome work over the stony ground; and when at length it came into action the Arabs had split up all over the open ground in our rear. However, there was still plenty to shoot at, and this gun gave the Arabs a very lively time. There was now nothing to prevent them riding back towards Casa Blanca, and attacking Brulard's square or the camp, had not an unexpected intervention turned them back. The *Gloire*, anchored off Casa Blanca, and ever on the look-out for a target, had

noticed the daring charge, and now they were well in our rear she commenced to hurl her huge projectiles amongst them. Most of these shells fell short, but they made a danger zone through which the Arabs did not care to pass, or, as I subsequently learnt, which they could not induce their horses to face. The only way of retreat was over the same narrow strip of plain which separated the left flank from the sea, and again there was a superb opportunity for the Tirailleurs had they been properly placed, yet no effort was made to send them forward. Commandant Provost had come up, and this was the last time I saw him alive. The last words I heard him utter were in favour of the infantry being pushed forward. Colonel Lewis and myself went forward to the left flank to watch the progress of the Arab attack. The latter, on their return journey, evidently thinking as they had not been molested in advancing that there were no French infantry on that side, rode boldly almost up to the crest and opened a very hot fire. Still no order was sent to the Tirailleurs. When we reached them the firing was very heavy, but the Tirailleurs, lying down behind cover, suffered but little loss, and, on the other hand, they inflicted none, for most of the Arabs repassed the left flank in safety.

We then returned to the "marabouts," where our horses were standing with the gun-teams. I saw several wounded men unattended because they were unable to find surgeons. No regular dressing-station had been established, and thus there

was no central point to which all wounded men could be brought, and these unfortunates had to take their chance. A soldier told me the surgeon had gone to attend Commandant Provost, who had been wounded in the shoulder, but not fatally. Unfortunately this was not the case, for a few minutes later some Legionaries came up carrying their Commandant, who was quite dead. The bullet had entered low down, and had evidently struck a blood-vessel near the heart, for he never regained consciousness. There was great grief in the ranks when his death became known, for he was very popular with all ranks, especially among the soldiers of the Legion. His sergeant-major told me he had served under him since the commencement of his career, and added, with true French dramatic effect, "I suppose my turn will come next." I heard afterwards that Provost had gone back to the Legion, who were lying firing just below the guns. Here he was struck by a bullet, probably fired by one of the lurking marksmen. His body was sent back towards the town under a strong escort.

After the death of Provost the plans, such as they were, seemed to fall through, and Colonel Blanc retired his men on the camp, having probably received orders from the General. This retirement was carried out in rather a haphazard manner, and the square formation was broken up, which was strange, considering the trouble which had been taken to preserve it during the advance, when a more mobile formation would have been of far greater value. A more enter-



prising foe than the Arabs would have taken advantage of the loose formation and great distance separating the companies. But the Arabs always seem to spend their strength on the strongest point of the enemy's line, and are tired out when a favourable moment does arrive for a really effective attack. They harassed the retirement on all sides, but the infantry and guns were well covered by the Goumiers and Spahis. These irregular cavalry are very useful for the purpose of interposing a screen between the infantry and small bodies of the enemy, allowing them to march in peace. General Drude was with Brulard's force, but he rode out and joined Blanc's column, and he ordered Brulard's guns into position where they could cover the retirement of Blanc's column. Nevertheless, our guns were frequently obliged to unlimber to keep the Arabs at a distance. When he came up the General ordered the square to be reformed, and in this formation we retired leisurely on the camp. The Arabs made a final attack on our left flank, but half a company of the Legion in a very strong position, assisted by two guns, soon drove them away. Towards the end Brulard's guns had some very pretty searching fire on the Arabs as they retired up a valley, killing over eighty, according to reliable reports which reached the camp from the interior.

The Arab loss must have been very heavy, for they attacked throughout with the utmost courage, but it would have been far more severe had the infantry been better placed; and sometimes the

guns might have been more judicious in the choice of targets. All their dead and wounded were, as usual, carried away, but the large number of horses showed they must have been considerable. Yet even the numbers of horses found cannot be considered very great, taking into account the huge amount of ammunition expended ; but, on the other hand, both wounded horses and wounded men go a very long way before dropping, and no doubt all the villages for many miles around are full of the injured men and beasts.

While the main fight was in progress a party of Arabs, with great daring and resource, approached quite close to the two mountain-guns on the crests before the camp, only guarded by a small infantry escort. They charged to within 250 yards, and, as their Caid told me afterwards, it was their intention to capture them and carry them away. This attempt was repulsed, but a native officer of *Tirailleurs* was killed. The Arabs remained in possession of the field ; but in warfare of this character that cannot be helped, and no doubt this wearing-down process will bear fruit in the end. It must be said that on the French side there was a lack of definite objective, and a failure to grasp a changing situation and to take advantage of it. Why, for instance, was not the attack pressed home towards the Arab camp, only some four miles away ? It was a great opportunity to take their camp in the face of a large force, and prove to the Arabs they could not hope to stand up against European trained troops. The great fear which tied the hands of the French com-

manders was that some of the dead or wounded might fall into the hands of the Arabs. One man was left behind during the day, a Tirailleur, and it is to be hoped he was dead before being captured. But small bodies of men could always be left in strong positions during an advance—which in itself is the most effective way of keeping off the enemy—to which all wounded men could be brought.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## CAPTURE OF THE CAMP AT TADDERT.

AFTER the action of September 3, when Commandant Provost was killed, there was a complete lull in the French operations for more than a week. This was due to the illness of General Drude, who was seized with a sharp attack of fever. He did not wish to delegate the command to his subordinates, because his next movement was designed on a large scale—at least, according to common rumour,—to capture the enemy's camp at Taddert, some twelve kilometres south of Casa Blanca. On the morning of Sunday, September 8, I was in the French camp at 5 A.M., having been informed on the previous night that an advance would be made. However, much to my disappointment and surprise, I found on my arrival that the troops, who had been drawn up before the camp, had returned to the lines, and that the previous night's orders had been countermanded, owing to the illness of the General. On the evening of the 10th I went round to headquarters, and was told that on the following morning a small force would leave the camp and make a reconnaissance. The object was

simply to blood and to exercise the two fresh battalions of the Foreign Legion and one of Tirailleurs which had recently arrived. "Come out if you like," said the kindly de Kervanoel, the General's A.D.C., "but it will only be a little affair." However, I have learnt by this time that reconnaissances are likely to develop in an astonishing manner, and on the morning of the 11th Colonel Lewis and myself were up betimes and ready to move out with the Goumiers, who led the advance. We were particularly anxious to see these irregulars at work, for a remarkable change had come over them in a short two weeks. They no longer rode about in a disorganised mass, without cohesion and without objective, shooting at any living object within six miles, and jabbering like monkeys. On this occasion they behaved like trained cavalry: a line of scouts, who entered every house, covered the front of the supports, and behind the supports came the main body under the eye of their captain, Berriaud of the Bureau d'Arabie. They scouted excellently, entering every house, garden, enclosure, or other spot where a lurking enemy might be in hiding. The scouts and supports were each under the command of a French lieutenant, who sent back a continual stream of written messages to Berriaud, keeping him admirably informed of the enemy's movements, and he in his turn sent them back to the main body marching in square a mile behind. The Goumiers were in high spirits, and evidently anticipated a day of success, for each man was arrayed in his brightest costume, making a pic-

turesque crowd as they trotted over the rough stony ground. Their chiefs wore magnificent robes of yellow or red or blue silk. Each of the men seems to have selected his own distinctive costume; and there were not two dressed alike amongst a hundred odd desert cavaliers. These Saharian Arabs are splendid men, both in physique and features. They are small, but tough and wiry as steel. Their faces are of a very high and refined stamp, and every feature bears the impress of intelligence.

The force which left camp consisted of all the cavalry — the Chasseurs, Spahis, and Goumiers; two companies of the Foreign Legion, two of the Tirailleurs, one Field Battery, one section mountain-guns, and two mitrailleuses. The whole was under the command of Commandant Passard.

It was not long before the Goumiers came into touch with the enemy. Three kilometres from the camp towards the south there is a farm called Alvarez, belonging to the Portuguese Consul, which is always occupied by the Arabs at night. The first shots came from the gardens as the leading Goumiers trotted into view. The enemy had no intention of holding this position, and, quickly mounting their horses, galloped out at the back as the Goumiers entered at the front. A few shots hastened their retirement. Now we knew the opening of the ball would not be much longer delayed, for this advance party would quickly rouse their comrades, reposing peacefully in well-fancied security at Taddert. The country between Casa Blanca and Taddert is a perfect manœuvre-

ground for the exercise of all arms. It is undulating, rising to a succession of ridges, then falling away into hollows, like the breaking of huge Atlantic rollers; thus, position after position can be taken on the crests and held until the moment comes to push the infantry forward again, while the artillery can be left behind in a commanding situation to bombard the next ridge until that is occupied, when a speedy canter across the intervening ground will place the guns in another perfect position.

After clearing Alvarez's farm the Goumiers continued their advance until they came to the first of the ridges I have attempted to describe. On the crest they halted, and a prolonged examination of the ground ahead was made by Captain Berriaud. This was interrupted by the appearance of numerous Arabs on the ridge in front, who fired on the Goumiers. The latter retired below the crest line, dismounted, crept quietly to the top again, and, lying down behind cover, opened a steady fire on the Arabs, galloping in all directions, 800 yards in front. It was a revelation how quickly the Goumiers had thrown off their primitive methods, so painfully apparent during the engagement of August 28, and acquired the habits of well-trained mounted infantry. Berriaud told me that he and his officers had only been able to induce them to dismount in action with the utmost difficulty, so opposed is it to the hereditary custom of centuries. The Goumiers held their ground until the square moved forward, and the guns came into action on the ridge,

shelling the crests and making the Arabs scatter over a broad front. General Drude himself rode up and assumed command of all the troops—for another strong force, consisting of four companies of the Legion, two of Tirailleurs, and a Field Battery, had now been despatched from camp to reinforce Passard's column. The French troops were not kept in a close square without mobility and with only a small front of fire. The General deployed his men, placing all in the firing-line with the exception of a company on either flank, who marched in column of sections ready to resist any sudden flank attack. But our broad front of over half a mile was in itself the best safeguard against flanking movements; and although small parties of the enemy did make frequent and heroic attempts to effect a diversion, they were never regarded seriously or allowed to interfere with the main forward movement. After fighting a brief action on the first ridge Drude ordered all his infantry forward, leaving the guns in position to cover the advance. The enemy remained on the crests in front for some time, dancing about like figures in a Punch-and-Judy show, and firing ineffectively. But they do not like cold steel, and long before we had breasted the ridge they were gone and making for another a thousand yards behind.

The line now halted, and for the next hour every gun, mitrailleuse, and man were kept busily engaged; for the enemy clung to the crests in front, under a very heavy fire, with great pertinacity. Well they might; for, unknown to the



French, only that one ridge separated them from the camp at Taddert, and the enemy wished to gain time to load his mules, collect his belongings, and remove his Casa Blanca loot before the dreaded Tirailleurs were amongst his tents. Had the General known the exact character of the ground in front he would no doubt have pushed on, sweeping away all opposition by the torrent of his advance, without waiting an hour to clear the ground with his artillery. Had this been done, no doubt large numbers of horses, mules, and much spoil would have been taken; but this delay enabled the Arabs to get everything except the bare tents safely away. The fight which now took place, although of no great severity, was of special interest, because every man was visible and all arms were engaged. It was an excellent opportunity for a tactical display such as all generals love, and it was taken full advantage of. Our front was composed of lines of Tirailleurs lying down and firing. Up in the firing line were two field-guns; to their right two mountain-guns which did excellent work; more to their right were the two mitrailleuses, beyond the infantry. Our right flank rested on gardens, farm buildings, and very broken ground. The Legion held the outskirts of these, and prevented the enemy from attacking the flank of the line. Our left also rested on some broken, stony ground, and was held by the Goumiers, who came in for some very hot fighting. On the ridges, 1000 yards behind, which we had just left, the remainder of the artillery had come into action

and shelled the Arabs over our heads. The second square also occupied this ridge. Here General Drude and his staff took up their position at a central point where he could command the entire field and reinforce any section of the front line. He did push forward another company of Tirailleurs before Passard's troops commenced to rush the last ridges which separated them from Taddert. Just as this advance was ordered the famous Red Caid, who has so distinguished himself in every engagement, tried to make a diversion by attacking our right flank with a mere handful of men. This heroic Arab is called El Hemerr, which means The Red, and he belongs to the M'dakra tribe in the Chaouia district, near Casa Blanca. He is called El Hemerr because he always dresses in red. He is paralysed in both hands, and cannot shoot, but is well known for his prowess in urging on his men. He is said by the Arabs to possess a charm which renders him bullet-proof, and certainly his escapes have been remarkable. He rode calmly about under a tremendous fire all through the attack on the camp on August 21. Now he was at one time within 1000 yards of the French mountain-guns, and even closer to the mitrailleuses and infantry, and yet, after seeing the failure of his heroic endeavour to make a diversion on our right flank, he rode out of action, attended by two followers, apparently unharmed.

When Drude gave the order to advance, the whole line swept forward as one man, the guns following just behind the infantry. The Arabs

stuck to their last ridges. But in vain; for the troops took no notice of their intermittent fire, and pushed steadily forward to the foot. Here the Tirailleurs, who were leading the advance, received orders to fix bayonets. In the twinkling of an eye the sun was shining on the long line of steel, the officers drew their swords, and the order was given to charge. On the top of the ridge was a farmhouse and gardens which might have been held for ever by resolute men, but the Arabs know nothing about defensive warfare, and hate the sight of steel; so their resolution failed, and they abandoned the crest. With a series of inspiring yells the red-turbaned Tirailleurs rushed the top, climbing into the farm, searching the gardens, and, finding the enemy had fled, they rushed out beyond, plying him with bullets. Then there arose another series of strange, discordant yells, for right before our eyes lay the Arab tents. Now we realised this was no longer a mere reconnaissance, but the crowning event of our little expedition—the capture and destruction of the enemy's camp. It was a fine sight. Masses of white-robed horsemen were galloping among the tents, hastily collecting their most important possessions; on the far side a mass of men and horses and laden mules were streaming away, making for a pass through the hills. Now was the chance for cavalry. If only a brigade of good horsemen had been present they would have turned the retirement into a rout and captured many of the enemy and nearly all his impedimenta. But

our cavalry only numbered 300 in all, and not one of the 300 was available at this decisive moment. Where are they? every one was asking. I learnt the reason of their absence on the following day from General Drude himself. He feared to leave such a great gap between his troops and the camp, and thought that the Arabs would pursue their usual tactics and attack his flank and close in behind him. Therefore he sent back his cavalry to guard his exposed right flank. This may be sound reasoning, but was it necessary? Even if the Arabs cut off the two French columns, we were so strong that on their return they could have swept away the feeble horsemen as a horse clears its back of flies with a contemptuous fling of its tail. As a matter of fact, the enemy were taken by surprise, and too demoralised to do anything except run away. Thus the cavalry were absolutely wasted. Not only were the cavalry wasted, but even within sight of the camp the infantry were held back for fully half an hour to allow the artillery to prepare the way by a bombardment, and to give time for the Legion to reinforce the Tirailleurs. This was absolutely unnecessary, for there were ample men in the front line all longing to push on and flushed with victory. When the order did at length come the Tirailleurs could no longer be restrained. They doubled over the intervening ground, climbed one little ridge in front of the main camp, then rushed amongst the tents. They were greatly disappointed in their hopes of loot, for nothing of value remained save a few chickens

and many stray dogs. The chickens were soon captured or killed. Many of the Tirailleurs could not be kept in the ranks, but rushed into the tents, only to return empty-handed. Their officers and non-commissioned officers belaboured them with sticks and the flat of their swords, and soon the line was re-formed. The advance was continued right beyond the tents until the hills on the far side were crowned. Here the exhausted men halted and lay down. Their work was done.

For the next half-hour the artillery had the field to themselves. Well placed on the last ridge behind Taddert, they had a glorious target, and took full advantage of it. The only road of retreat open to the fleeing Arabs was through the valley towards the south. The fire of all the guns was concentrated on this mass of men, as, in close formation, they tumbled over one another in their efforts to get out of range. Their losses at this point, according to their own reports, which reached the camp subsequently, were very great. Meanwhile the artillery continued to turn the defeat into a rout, in some measure making good the absence of the cavalry; the work of destruction was carried out by the Goumiers, who had re-appeared on the scene. The troops were formed in a huge square, embracing all the tents. These were set on fire. In half an hour all that was left of Taddert was a mass of smoking ruins. Under cover of the smoke some small parties of Arabs again attacked, but were quickly driven off. When not a tent remained above ground we commenced to retire towards Casa Blanca. The

men were in excellent spirits. I met the General, who was well pleased with the success of the day's operations, but explained that, owing to a mistake in carrying out his orders, the second line had deployed to the left of the first instead of to the right, where they could better have harassed the enemy's retreat. However, the object had been achieved, Taddert had been destroyed, and little else mattered. General Drude also told me afterwards that he had not announced his intention of going to Taddert the previous night, because he was not sure of the nature of the country between him and the enemy's camp. He feared that if he set out with the intention of going there, and then found it impossible, many irresponsible people with the army would have called it a reverse. Whereas by merely announcing a reconnaissance, he could push on or retire without committing himself to any definite step.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE FRENCH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN.

It is long since there has been an opportunity of following a French army on active service, and therefore considerable interest attaches to their operations against the Arabs round Casa Blanca, which may throw some light on the condition of their military forces, and perhaps give some clue as to how France would fare in a European war.

The troops in Morocco did not belong to the Conscription Army of France, with the exception of two Batteries of Artillery, the squadron of Chasseurs d'Afrique, and two companies of Engineers. They consisted of colonial troops, especially raised for service in Algeria, Tunis, and Tonkin, acclimatised to Northern Africa, and accustomed to active service or to conditions approximating it very closely; therefore it may be argued that their conduct in camp and in the field is no criterion of the condition of the Conscription Army of France proper, or of the spirit which animates it. But making due allowance for this, the divisions of a great army, trained under a common system by officers of the same school and

with similar traditions, cannot vary to any great extent; and the conduct and spirit of the troops in Northern Africa are likely to reflect with fair accuracy the condition and *esprit de corps* of the camps on the German frontier. The officers of France's colonial forces are drawn from different branches of her army, and thus their leadership and bearing, both in camp and in face of the enemy, may be taken as typical of the whole corps of French officers.

The army of Casa Blanca, under General Drude, was one of the most picturesque that has ever taken the field, and seldom has a general had under his command representatives of so many different nationalities and creeds. The cavalry was made up of a squadron of Chasseurs d'Afrique, who are Frenchmen recruited in Algeria, and who serve their term of service either in the Chasseurs or Zouaves; one squadron of Spahis, who are native Algerian Arabs trained as cavalry, are excellent light horsemen, good scouts, and trained to fight as mounted infantry; and one hundred Goumiers. These are Arabs of pure blood, who were enrolled as volunteers for service in Morocco: many of them are of good standing and have considerable property in their own country. Love of adventure and the hope of loot bring them to the front. They provide their own horses and kit, but are supplied with carbines and rations, and receive three francs per day. They are commanded by their own Caids, assisted by French officers, who belong to the Bureau d'Arabes. The Goumiers are handsome, small-boned, wiry men:



they can go all day without food or water, and delight in the roving life, the dangers and hardships of warfare. Their horses they tend as their children—allow them to wander in their tents by day and to sleep by their sides at night. Their picturesque appearance, their chivalrous conduct, and their evident delight in their work, win all hearts, and make them favourites in camp and brave comrades in the field. Every Goumier goes into action in a distinctive costume, and they sweep down upon the enemy in a gay, fluttering, irregular line,—purple, yellow, green, red, white, and gold blending and glittering in the sun like a fallen rainbow. Every man wears a head-dress of his own design, and, strange to observe, in Morocco were a number of those high straw hats similar to those in which the Korean nobleman parades the streets of Seoul. They are the finest of natural scouts, and form a perfect screen to cover the advance or the retirement of an army. At first their utility ended with scouting, for when attacked by large hordes of Moors they became excited and of little use, riding hither and thither, firing aimlessly and at impossible ranges from the saddle. But after two or three weeks' strenuous work in the field a great change was manifest, for the French officers worked a transformation, and the Goumiers developed from a disorganised mass of irregular horsemen into a trained body of men who, while losing none of the natural scouting and predatory habits of the children of the desert, were able also to fight after the manner of mounted infantry. When attacked the advance

parties dismounted, sent back their horses, took advantage of any cover, and astonished the Moors by the steadiness and accuracy of their fire. This was a great achievement to those who know the difficulty of inducing an Arab to dismount in action; and that such changes, involving not only military training but of an organic character, should have been effected in so short a time, reflects equal credit on the perseverance of the teachers and on the sagacity of the pupils. The French know well how to train native troops, and the drill-sergeant has an inexhaustible supply of raw material to draw from in Algeria, Tunis, and perhaps later from Morocco itself. Like all Arabs on hostile expeditions, the Goumiers ride mares,—for the Arab and Barb stallions too often betray their presence to the enemy and render surprise impossible.

The infantry of Drude's army consisted of three battalions of Tirailleurs and three of the Foreign Legion. The Tirailleurs are mostly recruited from the town of Algeria. They wear the red fez, zouave jacket, baggy trousers, cloth gaiters, and boots; are officered partly by Frenchmen and partly by natives, but the latter cannot rise above the grade of lieutenant, and are usually promoted from the ranks as a reward for long service and good conduct. The war establishment of a French battalion consists of four companies of 250 men each; but the battalions at Casa Blanca were by no means up to full strength, many men having been left behind in Algeria. The commander of a battalion is the commandant, who has under

him a major, who corresponds to our adjutant; each company is commanded by a captain, who is mounted when on active service, and has two French lieutenants and two officers *indigènes*. The French officers are seconded from the line, and employment in the Tirailleurs is much sought after, for it brings increased pay, with opportunities for active employment in the colonies, and only picked men who know their work thoroughly are selected.

The whole establishment of the Foreign Legion consists of four regiments of three battalions each. This corps is the lineal and only descendant of the old soldiers of fortune and hired mercenaries of the Middle Ages. It is open to all-comers, and its ranks are filled with volunteers of all nations. The recruit enlists for five years, is trained in Algeria, and can re-engage until he has reached a certain age. During peace he receives no pay except a trifling allowance for tobacco, but on active service this sum is increased to 50 centimes per day, part of which goes towards his messing; and at the end of fifteen years' service he is entitled to a pension of from 600 to 800 francs a-year. The Foreign Legion, in the eyes of those unacquainted with its true composition, has gained a somewhat unenviable notoriety, and there is a very prevalent belief that its ranks are filled with fugitives from justice, whose only alternative to imprisonment in their native land is service under a foreign flag, where their antecedents will not be too closely inquired into. Now all this is greatly exaggerated, and the facts are simple. No man

who is known to have been convicted of a crime, either in France or in the land of his birth, can be admitted into the Legion; and although there may be a small minority whose "pasts" would not bear investigation, any habitual criminal would soon be discovered and dismissed. The Legion, composed of the adventurers of all nations, is naturally no kid-glove body of warriors whose morality in peace and war is above reproach. It would be just as absurd to depict them as a body of saintly Crusaders (if such ever existed), as to denounce them as a band of criminals. They possess all the good and bad qualities of the adventurers of all ages, and, following the usual course, prove themselves of infinitely more trouble in times of peace than in times of war. On campaign they are in their natural element; it is for the hope of active service that they enlist: and if the spoils of opulent cities and the fair daughters of their vanquished foes are no longer allowed them by right of conquest, many a looted chicken, horse, and cow in Northern Africa proves that the spirit of the old freebooter still lives, though the perquisites are mean when compared with those of former days. I will quote one instance to show the excellent behaviour of the Legion on campaign. An officer told me he had seen as many as three hundred men from one battalion in cells at one time in Algeria (chiefly for drunkenness), yet during the time I was at Casa Blanca there was only one court-martial—a paltry affair, in which a Legionary threatened to go for a native corporal of Tirailleurs.

Frenchmen predominate in the Legion, Germans come next in proportion, and the balance is distributed amongst the nations. Thus in the ranks of the French army of Casa Blanca, fighting side by side, carrying the great message of civilisation and of a higher morality to the Mahommedan, I met an English captain, an English sergeant-major, a German lieutenant, a Servian colonel, an Italian, an officer who was half Scotch and half French, and a Tonkinese lieutenant, a sturdy, cheerful little warrior who greatly resembled a Japanese. There were yet other types, for I have only mentioned those with whom I was personally acquainted. Thus while the delegates of the Powers foregathered at The Hague to advance the divine injunction of peace on earth and goodwill towards men, and passed unanimous resolutions declaring as wrong and unchristian the bombardment of unfortified towns, their fellow-countrymen, equally numerous and equally representative, were assembled at an isolated little port on the Moroccan coast expressly for the purpose of doing that which the Peace Mission was summoned to stop, and actually bombarded a defenceless town at the very moment the resolution was carried. This seems to prove that, although his conscience may be more readily pricked, man himself has altered but little, and still takes as keen a delight in the slaughter of his fellow-men as ever. Now, however, his primitive brutality is tinged with hypocrisy, and he no longer plays his favourite game whole-heartedly and without *arrière pensée*, but endeavours to

ease his conscience by the appointment of abortive Hague Tribunals, whose usual achievement is to confirm, justify, and add to the legitimate rules of war certain new and hideous methods of destruction which have sprung into existence since a former conference.

In the early days of the French operations before Casa Blanca, it was evident to the onlookers that all were new to their work and took the keenest delight in it. Thus, when the Arabs attacked on August 18, the camp was a scene of bustle, excitement, and no little confusion, because every man in the army, from the oldest colonel to the humblest private, was pleased beyond measure that the serious work of his life had really commenced in earnest. But when the first charm of novelty had passed, calmness and perfect discipline became the order of the day; and if the troops in Morocco are any criterion of the army as a whole, the latter is a most perfect military machine. In fact, the French troops give you the impression of being over-trained, too machine-like, too methodical, and too certain in all their movements. Every officer and man seems to know his exact position on the chess-board, and falls into his place as if by some natural instinct. The movements of the cavalry, artillery, and infantry are always admirably carried out. The extensions, open order work, keeping in touch, and reinforcing the firing-line, are done to perfection by the infantry, and with a minimum of words of command; the cavalry always seem to choose the psychological moment to advance or to retire;

and the artillery is invariably in position when its services are needed. Every part of the machine goes like clockwork, and if a section gets out of gear the whole must stop until the defect is remedied. This perfection of centralisation and control may be necessary and admirable, but it certainly leads to lack of initiative on the part of the units which comprise the whole; and I should say that the French army of to-day is as much hide-bound by formula and the arithmetic of the drill-book as was our own army previous to the South African War. This was seen over and over again in the operations against the Arabs: there was often a failure to take up the most suitable ground on the part of the company commanders, who seemed loth to move their men a yard out of the alignment without a definite word of command; often a failure to hold the true crest of a ridge, an error which led to so many disasters in South Africa; and in many engagements there seemed to be a lack of elasticity and failure to take advantage of changes in the enemy's movements. Although there was plenty of dash among the individual units, there was little shown in the handling of the army; but this may be partly due to the exigencies of the political situation and the fear lest any of the wounded should fall into the enemy's hands.

The French have always possessed the true cavalry spirit—a great dash, a love of good horses, and a partiality for the sabre; and although they were often held back in Morocco for sentimental considerations, whenever an opportunity presented

itself they charged the enemy with all their old-time vigour, and nothing could have been finer than their shock tactics. On the other hand, they were frequently at fault in scouting; often when covering the advance or retirement or protecting the flanks of the army, they failed to occupy the true crest lines and best covering positions, and allowed the enemy to come close up before he was discovered. They seemed to think it was more important to keep in touch with their own infantry than with the enemy, and there was little realisation of the true functions of cavalry in covering the advance of an army. Frequently the whereabouts of the Arabs, although within a few short miles of the camp, were quite unknown, although a proper cavalry reconnaissance would speedily have disclosed them. How far this was due to defects in their training and how far to orders it is difficult to say. There was such an aversion in France to sacrificing the life of a single Frenchman in Morocco that General Drude was often obliged to hold back his men, merely to avoid the small losses which are bound to result from any action in war. When the Goumiers arrived on the scene there was far more enterprise shown in reconnaissance work, because there were no sentimental considerations about losing a few men of Arab blood,—a morality of utility rather than of Christianity. But the impression left on the mind is that the French cavalry have been trained rather for shock tactics than for use as mounted infantry, and this is borne out by the superb dash with which they



hurled themselves on the Moors whenever they had a free hand. There was a lack of cohesion in the cavalry movements owing to the fact that Goumiers, Spahis, and Chasseurs were under separate commanders, who generally acted independently of one another; and it was not until the worst of the fighting was over that a young cavalry colonel was sent from Algeria to assume command of the whole.

The operations were an object-lesson in the employment of artillery against cavalry, and I think the result must have come as a surprise to most soldiers and to all artillerists,—always a confident and self-satisfied corps. According to most of the preconceived theories of modern warfare, it is impossible for bodies of cavalry to manœuvre in the open, exposed to full view, anywhere within effective range of modern artillery. The gunner with his superb quick-firer will tell you that, given fair conditions, nothing can live within his power of destruction. Yet how different is the result in actual practice! The French artillery has enjoyed a great reputation ever since the little Corsican honoured that branch of the service with his magic personality. The French have possessed a first-class quick-firer with fixed ammunition for eight years before any other Power adopted it, and their gunners are very efficient. Yet, with every advantage of training and modern science, the despised Arab horsemen were able to attack again and again in large bodies within decisive ranges, suffering comparatively little loss, when, according to the gunners' calculations, they should have

been utterly destroyed. The French had two batteries—the 12th and the 18th—at Casa Blanca whilst I was with the army, in addition to mountain-guns, and they were in action almost every day for a month, and thus had every opportunity of becoming accustomed to the light and range. When the fights were near the town the field-guns were assisted by those of the *Gloire*, yet this tremendous shell-fire inflicted comparatively small loss, and never once deterred the Arabs from attacking, if one can judge from the number of horses left dead on the ground. A rapidly moving target is so difficult to pick up, and the range has to be so constantly changed, that, except for an occasional lucky shell which gets home, cavalry can manœuvre almost scathless—at least, this was the case in Morocco. The French shrapnel carries three hundred bullets, and should burst 10 metres above the ground when the area of destruction is 20 yards wide and 250 deep. The Moors were not slow to discover this, and adopted the plan of advancing in small bodies some 20 or 30 yards apart, so as to localise the effects of the shells. At first the gunners, new to the conditions, and shooting for the first time under fire, were very much at fault, especially in judging distance. They use no range-finders, and all distances are judged by the officers. Many of them could not have been very highly trained in this important art. It should be said in justice that the French are accustomed to shoot in massed batteries, where the range is quickly picked up by one or two trial shots. General Drude himself

said, "You must not judge the shooting of our artillery by what you see single guns or a section doing: they are accustomed to shoot in massed batteries, and I guarantee they will destroy anything in a few minutes within reasonable range." This is no doubt true, and whenever possible the guns were used together at Casa Blanca, when on occasions they would have done far better work against a mobile enemy like the Moors had they been more scattered. Here, again, the loss of initiative, which results from too much machine-like training, was visible. There was often a failure to seize the best target, or to move a gun rapidly from one point to another to take advantage of a change in the enemy's position. The handling of the guns was excellent, considering the gunners only serve for two years, and belong to the ordinary Conscription Army of France. They served their guns accurately and coolly, often under a heavy and concentrated rifle-fire, for the Moors never missed an opportunity of shooting at the guns, caissons, and limbers. If a battery is to be properly handled, everything depends on the officer in charge. If he gives the objects and ranges calmly and accurately, his gunners, if properly trained, will serve their gun correspondingly well, no matter what the conditions. A gun's team, although composed of individuals, has but one nervous system, the centre of which is found in the officer in command, and the state of his feelings vibrates through all ranks and sets the scale of efficiency or the reverse. If an officer is the least bit

nervous and flurried, and is obviously guessing wildly at distances and objectives, then every man will become infected with the same spirit, and the battery might as well be in store. In a highly-strung race like the French, the need for calm and good officers is very great, and those for the artillery cannot be too carefully selected.

From what I saw in Morocco, I feel certain that it will be practical for cavalry to charge artillery if they ever catch a battery in the open unprotected by infantry. Cavalry charging artillery in position, in a very open formation, and gradually closing in as they near their objective, will suffer very small loss, if one can draw a moral from the experience of the Arab horse. The French take this view, and have armed their artillery with the carbine, so that at the last minute they may fight as infantry if they are suddenly overwhelmed by a charge of cavalry. I was told they learnt this lesson from our experiences in the South African War, after seeing how frequently our artillery was captured by the Boers.

The French infantry have always been renowned for their marching powers, and the troops in Morocco did nothing to belie their reputation. To watch the Tirailleurs and Foreign Legion returning to camp after a long and trying day in the hot sun, marching over rough and stony ground, was a revelation. The French soldier, when in full marching-order, carries a pack on his back which, with his rifle and ammunition, weighs sixty pounds, and towers above his head.

Yet, in Algeria, they think nothing of marching forty or fifty kilometres a-day over stony ground thus equipped. It seems impossible to tire the Tirailleurs, who, accustomed to the climate and to bad going, would outmarch any troops in the world. The fire-control of the French infantry is good, but the shooting is very bad. No range-finders are carried, and all distances are judged by idle guesses, which vary according to the views of the individuals who give them. I never saw more miserable shooting, with more wretched results, than that of the French against the Arabs. The men seemed utterly unable to get the range, or even approximately near it; and this was not due to nervousness or excitement, for the Foreign Legion and the Tirailleurs are always models of precision and calmness in the face of the enemy. The shooting of the Foreign Legion was better than that of the native troops, and improved very considerably as the men became accustomed to the atmospheric conditions and gauged the speed of rapidly moving horsemen. When troops shoot badly the primary fault lies with the officers who have neglected to train them. There is the school who maintain that strict accuracy in shooting is not essential in modern warfare, and that as long as a certain field is swept with fire, the results are likely to be better than if every man is shooting accurately at the wrong range. This theory may contain an element of truth, especially in a European conflict, where troops will fight *en masse*, and victories will be gained by weight of numbers regardless of sacrifice. But it was lamentable to see Arab horsemen riding about in almost complete

immunity within 600 to 800 yards of lines of steady infantry, and there really was some ground for the claim of the Red Caid that he could make bullets melt in the air. The French officers and non-commissioned officers control the fire with great care, seldom if ever allowing the men to use their magazines; and if there is the least tendency to shoot wildly or to waste ammunition, it is immediately checked. Many French officers believe that a magazine is unnecessary, and merely tends to make men excited; and leads to a hopeless waste of ammunition. This may be sound reasoning, but surely there may come moments in a great engagement when the side which can pour in a terrific magazine fire for a few moments will have a great and decisive advantage. I am rather inclined to think the French underestimate the importance of rapid guns, from a consciousness that their magazine is vastly inferior to that of the other first-class Powers. The Lebel is made on the old Winchester system, and the cartridges are contained in a second chamber underneath the barrel; they must be inserted separately, a long and troublesome process, and the magazine is apt to jam and cannot be easily remedied. There is a cut-off, and the soldiers tell you the rifle shoots admirably as a single-loader. The French use their machine-guns as separate units, and the battalions do not have machine-gun sections.

The mitrailleuse and the ammunition are carried on mules. The cartridges are contained in little clips of twenty-five, the loader inserting another clip as the last cartridge of the former enters the breech, and thus there is no delay in the con-

interesting as showing how little the character of the people changes with its history. The French officer is still, as he has always been, a model of dashing bravery, ever ready to expose himself to the enemy's fire and to head a charge with drawn sword for the sake of glory and *la belle France*. The officers, whether on the staff or in the ranks, always stand up under fire, and disdain to take cover, like our own at the beginning of the South African War. This bravado sets a fine example to the men; but it proved to be too costly against skilled marksmen like the Boers, and finally died a natural death. The average casualties among the French officers in Morocco have been high, because they stood exposed to the fire of the Arab sharpshooters when their men were lying down. This was unnecessary, and the French will learn, as we have learned, that it is even more important for an officer to guard his life from useless danger than it is for the men; and as long as the latter do not require an example, it is the duty of every officer to do his utmost to preserve his life. The French still retain all their love of showy actions and glory. It is individual example which they admire most, and any officer who has in any way distinguished himself in the face of the enemy becomes a popular hero, and his deeds will long be the talk of the camp. In this respect they are the exact reverse of the Japanese, who absolutely sink individualism, and look upon all officers and men as parts of a machine, ascribing the credit for success or the responsibility for

failure to the entire army, not to the general who happens to be in command. The Japanese soldier is just as content to serve under one general as under another, for individuals count for nothing with him, with the exception of his Emperor, who represents both his country and his religion. Thus they see nothing strange in rushing to certain destruction, leaving their generals and colonels smoking cigarettes, drinking tea, and warming their hands by the fire, in the perfect safety of bomb-proof shelters, because they realise some one must be left behind to ensure the success of the attack. But the French soldier would hardly see the logical side of the matter or understand the reason for leaving his senior officers in safety while he rushed to death or glory. His character is such that he might feel that he was betrayed, and thus he would not advance with confidence. I also doubt if any French officer would remain for a moment in shelter while his comrades were rushing to destruction, for his fiery character would compel him to place himself at the head of his men and take his chances in the firing-line. Thus we see the essential difference in the character of the fiery Gaul and the philosophical Oriental. The French have ever been the same. Why were Napoleon's marshals, with the exception of Massena and Davoust, nearly always unsuccessful when given independent commands? Because they had won their way to the front more by reckless heroism and showy actions than by clear thinking on the battlefield. As long as the



master-mind was there to order and utilise this bravery in the right way and at the right moment, all went well; but when the Emperor was absent, the cool-brained Wellington or the strategical Archduke Charles had little difficulty in beating his lieutenants. A European war would probably breed another batch of French commanders, cast in the same mould as those of one hundred years ago, and unless some master-mind is there to control and make use of the wilder spirits, the result is likely to be disastrous to France. The French army is very critical of its leaders, and every officer is summed up immediately and a value placed on him. If some colonel has been put in command of a force for the day and is engaged with the enemy, every officer and man watches to see how he acquits himself, and the same evening his every action will be discussed and criticised round the mess-table and camp-fire. The French soldier does not go into action trusting blindly to his superiors; he is partly his own general, and he compares the movements of his commander with what his own would have been had their positions been reversed. There is a stupendous amount of gossip always floating through the ranks and camps of a French army, and most extraordinary rumours about events and individuals go the round, and are believed by some and discredited by others. With such a highly strung, imaginative race, evils might result from this cause. If, in the event of a war with Germany, on the eve of some great engagement a rumour was circulated that the Government

had been changed, or that the French had been defeated elsewhere, the result on the troops engaged might be serious, for the Frenchman would think of these things: he cannot concentrate his mind purely on the task before him. He is too intelligent and quick-witted to make an ideal warrior.

It will be surprising if there is any permanent bond of friendship between France and England; the characteristics of the two races are so distinct and apart that there is sure to be an underlying antipathy, for each nation retains those customs and qualities it admires most. How often have I heard Frenchmen complain of the Englishman's coldness, aloofness, and apparent lack of sympathy with those around him. I asked a Frenchman to describe an English officer in the Foreign Legion to me. "He is tall, fair, silent, and cold, like all English," was the reply. If you introduce an Englishman to a Frenchman, the latter has said half a dozen pleasant and polite things before the Englishman has recovered from the first horror of hearing any other tongue spoken besides his own. The Frenchman makes no effort to conceal his feelings, whereas the Englishman despises emotion. After an engagement the only confidence ever vouchsafed by an English subaltern is, "I was in a d——d funk." Not so with the Frenchman: he will describe, in the minutest detail, all his sensations from the moment the engagement commenced to the moment it was over. If he felt frightened he will tell you so; if he felt brave you will also hear about it. I remember a young surgeon

coming up to Colonel Lewis and myself and telling us in all seriousness to notice that he was binding up wounded men under fire in just the same manner as he did in hospital! I think the French are almost more concerned in action in analysing their own feelings and in watching the behaviour of those around them than in actually defeating the enemy.

The French have very little sporting instinct, as we understand the term, and that is why they are so cordially disliked by all native races,—for if the sporting instinct is absent, its place is generally taken by a certain cruelty of disposition. I remember one instance which particularly struck me as showing the gulf—the unbridgable gulf—which separates the English and French character. Towards the end of the operations, when some of the tribes had sent in delegates to negotiate for terms, General Drude issued orders that any Moors found carrying arms within ten kilometres of the town would be shot. The following day I accompanied a small body of French troops on a reconnaissance, and a party of Goumiers, who were scouting ahead under Lieutenant ———, suddenly stumbled upon twelve mounted Arabs and thirteen on foot. The mounted men rode off and escaped, but the Goumiers charged the thirteen on foot, killing seven and capturing the other six. The lieutenant galloped back to his captain, saluted him with his blood-stained sword, and reported his exploit. A moment later the six ragged, miserable, half-starved Moors were brought in. Now these men, having been caught in arms, were liable to be shot; but

as the only weapons found amongst the whole thirteen were one broken Martini-Henry rifle, three old jingals, and a bayonet stuck on the end of a stick, but five out of the thirteen could have been armed, and they in this harmless manner. Under the circumstances, as seven had already been killed, the others might very reasonably have been spared. An English subaltern having captured six men under such circumstances, and knowing the order in force, would probably have thrown away the four useless guns and brought them into camp as unarmed, so that they might be spared. His sporting instinct would have prompted him to do this, especially as he had killed seven in the charge. But the French do not see matters in this light. The six unfortunates were brought before the captain, who spoke a few words to them and then struck each man with his whip. Ten minutes later they were led off to the flank in line holding each other's hands, and as they walked they were shot in the back by the Goumiers in a very haphazard manner, for there was only one executioner for each man, and consequently it took many shots before they were dead. Then their bodies were burnt. I had no idea of their approaching fate, and just previously had given one of them my horse to hold. This act was justifiable under the terms of the proclamation, but, considering all things, it was unnecessary, especially as the tribe were negotiating the terms. Yet these actions were performed by men who were always the most charming companions and close personal friends. It simply marks another

difference in the character of the races. Lieutenant —, who had performed this feat, became quite a hero in consequence.

A great deal is written on the loose discipline of the French army, and the unsatisfactory relations existing between officers and men ; but the discipline of the army of Morocco was excellent, and the relations between them could not have been on a better basis. The troops gave very little trouble, and, as already said, there was only one court-martial during the time I was at Casa Blanca. The men seemed to have the greatest respect not only for their officers, but also for their non-commissioned officers ; and the atmosphere was that of a large and happy family, where all worked together in perfect harmony for the benefit of the whole. A French soldier has easy access to his officer. There is far less formality than in our army, and I have frequently seen an officer standing with his hand on a man's shoulder, giving him friendly advice, as if he were an equal. The officers take the greatest interest in the welfare of their men, and do their utmost to make the company or troop a comfortable and agreeable home. I do not think the reported loose discipline need be taken very seriously. Such tales are the work of hired agitators and political wire-pullers, a small minority of whom must be found in every conscription army. In times of peace their voice is heard, but during war a wave of patriotism quickly sweeps them from the arena. On active service good discipline asserts itself automatically, and officers and men soon get to know one another, for all are engaged

in a difficult and dangerous game, and it is in the interests of all to mutually assist one another. Naturally there are evils and abuses in the French army, and the most apparent are political favouritism and slowness of promotion. The long and weary years of service in the lower grades are enough to try the patience of Job, and they are rendered worse if you know you have been neglected either because of your political views or for your creed. There was a lieutenant on the staff, thirty-seven years of age, who had been continually passed over, though a first-rate officer, because he had the misfortune to bear an old Breton Catholic name. These abuses lead to a great deal of discontent. I believe there is a strong desire for war—there is nothing unnatural in this, since it will be found in all armies whose officers are worthy of the name,—as it is felt that war will sweep away many of the existing evils, and lead to rapid advancement and quick promotion.

How would the French army of to-day fare in a war with Germany? That is a question every Frenchman asks himself; and that is the problem he is anxious, yet half fears, to put to the test. The army will enter on the encounter in a very different and more healthy spirit than in 1870: there will be none of the arrogance of assured success, and, consequently, lack of preparation; and no talk of a promenade to Berlin. The army will march to the front resolute and determined to do its best, and knowing it is staking the last die on France's existence as a first-class Power,

—for another failure would let loose a flood of anarchy, and lead to the breaking up of her institutions, with complete social disruption. The spirit of the army would be the same as that of Napoleon's troops when they set out for the campaign of 1815. "We marched to Waterloo," said General Foy, "all of us without fear, most of us without hope." The struggle will be a grim one, and will be decided in the first few weeks of the war. If the French army can find a great chief in whom it has confidence, and if it gains any success, however small, at the start, it will be certain to give a splendid account of itself. But preliminary disaster might lead to serious results. With modern fortresses and weapons it is almost impossible for a nation to be overwhelmed and invaded as France was in 1870. Defensive positions can be rendered so strong; and modern armies, consisting as they do of entire nations in arms, are so large, that it is almost impossible to surround them and force them to surrender, even though greatly outnumbered, as was shown in the great engagements in Manchuria. The French will probably fight a strictly defensive campaign along the line of their chain of frontier fortresses, and the opening weeks of the war may see a number of murderous but indecisive engagements which would speedily convince both countries that the only solution of the conflict was an equitable peace. The French would be quite satisfied with an indecisive campaign: their honour would be upheld, and it would prove they were not entirely at the mercy of Germany and

liable to be invaded at any moment. It is difficult to see why Germany should object to giving France a free hand in Morocco, as she has no paramount interest there herself, and the more France is occupied in Northern Africa the better it is for the peace of Europe. That was a view taken by Prince Bismark. There are many who attribute the disasters of 1870 largely to the wars in Algeria, which preceded that year, for the French officers became demoralised by the life, and the bonds of discipline were weakened by consequent irregular warfare and careless habits acquired in the field against the Arabs. It is not likely the same story will be repeated in Morocco; but if France continues her forward policy, it must eventually lead to the employment of a great number of officers and men, and weaken her hands in Europe. The French consider 100,000 men would be required to subdue the country; and although at first sight this seems a high estimate, it is probably very near the mark when the character of the warfare, the nature of the country, and the necessity for numerous small garrisons are considered.

The great conscription armies of the Continent cannot be held back for ever from flying at each other's throats, and sooner or later we are bound to see another European war. The impression left on the mind after following the operations in Morocco is that the French army had been trained for an entirely different species of warfare, and that it had some little difficulty in accustoming itself to the conditions of savage



irregular fighting. Thus they were inclined to overestimate their task, and to ascribe higher qualities to their opponents than their prowess warranted. Although the enemy was the Arab, it is not too much to say that every French officer and soldier went into action with a very different foe in mind, and that he regarded his dreary marches over the stony plains in Morocco, and his fights with the Moors, as a dress-rehearsal to a war with Germany, which each in his heart regards as inevitable. The Frenchman never talks of any other possible enemy than the German. How often have I heard them say, "Ah, if we were fighting the Germans we should not do so-and-so; but here it does not matter." "Yes," says the artillery officer with a sigh, stroking his beloved quick-firer, "we should have attacked Germany four years ago, when our artillery was so much better than hers,—then we would have had an enormous advantage; but now she is steadily rearming." Their minds are ever concentrated on this absorbing problem of France's future; and those who imagine that the spirit of enmity is dead, or that the wrongs and humiliations of 1870 have been forgotten or forgiven, would be completely disillusioned after a brief campaign with the troops. No French soldier's honour can rest until that horrible nightmare in his country's story has been in some measure atoned for or avenged; and that is why the little army of 6000 men fighting the Arabs in Morocco was so critical of itself and its commanders.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MOOR AS A SOLDIER.

THE campaign in the Chaouia has been of great instructive value to the French, even although it has led to no immediate great material gain. It has enabled them to estimate with fair accuracy what amount of opposition they might expect to encounter if they invaded Morocco and occupied its capital, Fez. Two facts or lessons may be drawn from the campaign—(1) the Moors have lost none of their former bravery in the field; (2) in spite of their heroism, their power of effective resistance to disciplined troops is very small.

In fact, the French who, up to the time of their experiences at Casa Blanca, looked upon the conquest of Morocco as an even more difficult task than their conquest of Algeria, now hold very different views; and the Moors, who thought they could always defeat the French with consummate ease, now realise that they have no chance. The optimism of the Gaul and the pessimism of the Arab are due to the difference in the character of savage warfare caused by modern weapons. When

the savage and the trained soldier met in battle, each armed with a weapon which was not effective at any range over 100 yards, and which took a minute to recharge, they were on terms of comparative equality, especially at close quarters. Thus, in the fighting in Algeria the charges of the Arab horse obtained a well-deserved respect; and the French had a high opinion of the daring of the Arab cavalry and of their skill in the use of their weapons. In the days of muzzle-loaders, which carried 100 yards, the commander of a square might well feel some anxiety if he found himself a long way from his base or supports, surrounded by thousands of the enemy's horse, and having an ever-increasing number of killed and wounded to look after. But now all has changed. The field-gun, capable of firing fifteen shrapnel shells a-minute, the mitrailleuse, discharging its six hundred bullets, and the rapid fire of the magazine-rifle have upset the old-time equality, and made it almost impossible for the Arab or any other fanatical race to offer any material resistance to the invader. In Morocco the task of the French is simplified owing to the very indifferent weapons with which the majority of the Moors are armed. The Act of Algeciras has so effectively put an end to the sale of arms and ammunition, that in a few years' time there will hardly be an effective modern rifle in the country, and the few that exist will be rendered useless owing to the scarcity of cartridges. Even now the majority of the Moors are obliged to carry home-made flintlocks or muzzle-loading cap guns,

and even caps are contraband under the Act of Algeciras. Therefore the only weapon on which the Moor can rely in the future is the ornamented flintlock or jingal which he makes himself, and for which he manufactures the powder and shot. Strange though it may seem, the majority of the Moors prefer this primitive weapon to rifles of a more modern type. This is due to their peculiar, childlike character. They delight to pour the powder down the muzzle, to ram home the bullet, to adjust the flint, and to pour powder into the pan. Then they cock it and pull the trigger. They like to see the preliminary flash of the powder in the pan, followed by the second explosion as the train reaches the charge, and the greater the display the more effective they think it. Disasters are frequent, but they only add to the fun of the sport. Two or three charges are apt to be rammed home instead of the regulation one, and if the barrel is not a good one it bursts or expands. Where the bullet goes does not matter in the least. Once the trigger is pulled its destinies are in the hands of Allah, and whether it strikes an enemy or an ally or the ground or neighbouring cattle, or whether it remains in the barrel, it is all the same to the man behind the gun. These primitive weapons are quite suitable for internecine warfare, where all are armed alike, and are able to come to close quarters; but the Moors found to their cost that it is very poor fun carrying them into action against highly disciplined troops armed with machine-guns and magazine rifles. In the fighting in the Chaouia the Moors

brought into action a great variety of weapons. They carried Martinis, Gras, Remingtons, and Winchester, and the majority muzzle-loaders and flintlocks. With these heavy-bore rifles they managed to make things fairly hot at times for the French, but they lost heavily if they attempted to come to close quarters, and the warrior with a Martini or a Gras had to be very sparing of his ammunition. At one time cartridges were fetching half a dollar apiece. They only managed to keep up the struggle as long as they did owing to the fact that the same warriors seldom fought twice, but were replaced by tribes from all over the country, who came down to enjoy a day's sport at the expense of the infidel. The French campaign in the Chaouia has had one excellent and far-reaching result. It has completely disillusioned the mass of the Moors from the belief that they can drive out the infidel at any time they like to rise and assert their authority. The warriors who fought in the Chaouia, many of whom I met under different circumstances in Fez, do not admit that they are personally inferior to the French, but they do allow the superiority of the latter's weapons. "We would have driven them into the sea," they say, "but for their big guns, which contain so many bullets and reach such a long way that it is impossible to contend against them." Another Caïd remarked: "That day we killed hundreds of the French, but the big guns enabled the remainder to reach their camp." This is not the spirit of defeat, but the lesson has sunk deeply into the hearts of the

Moors, and has given them a wholesome respect for the soldiers and for the weapons of the infidel.

Nevertheless the Moors contended with the utmost bravery against the odds of armament. Their method of attack has remained the same since the days of the Numidians. They invariably fight on horseback, and rely on their extreme mobility and suddenness of attack to ensure success. In the past they must have been formidable opponents. I have seen four or five thousand mounted men suddenly appear, apparently out of the sky, and surround a square in far less time than it takes to write about it. But long-range weapons have made it easy to resist these attacks, whereas in former days they frequently met with success. Under modern rifle-fire they could only gallop across the front of the squares at a distance varying from 500 to 800 yards, discharge their rifles at ineffective ranges, and then make off again to another vantage point. Such tactics as these can never lead to effective results. On the other hand, it was equally difficult for the French to score a decisive success, for the Arabs usually dispersed when the infantry advanced. The Moors, however, later in the campaign, showed that they had the making of good soldiers in them by endeavouring to adopt their tactics to suit the conditions of modern warfare. Finding that they inflicted very little harm by their wild excursions across a line of magazine rifles, some of them would dismount, and, taking up positions behind cover,

they endeavoured to pick off the officers as they stood up behind the lines of recumbent infantry. Thus the number of officers killed and wounded was out of all proportion to the number of men. The Moorish cavalry were always ready to mix it up with the French cavalry, frequently inflicting considerable loss on them. Thus, from the purely military standpoint, the conquest of Morocco presents very few difficulties to the French; but the occupation and gradual pacification of that country is a very different problem, and France will have to face it boldly, as she has in Algeria. But I do not propose to go into this question now, because I shall have an opportunity of doing so later on. The French army could be at Fez in about ten days from the Algerian frontier, and they would encounter no resistance worthy of the name. After the capital had been occupied the task of absorption would have to be more gradually undertaken. The lines of communication would be cut at times, stray columns might be cut off, a few isolated patrols or vedettes might pay the penalty, but except for these incidents, which come to every army in a savage country, the purely military obstacles are practically nil. All idea of a prolonged, desperate, fanatical resistance to French arms on the part of the Moors is out of the question. The country will maintain semi-independence until just such time as it is convenient to France to take possession of it. Europe has ceased to interfere, and has left France practically a free hand to do what she likes as long as the open door is maintained. Thus, from the French

standpoint, and, alas! from the Moorish standpoint, the campaign in the Chaouia has been of the utmost importance. It has shown France just what amount of resistance she may expect to encounter, and it has proved to the Moors how hopeless it is for them to longer talk of driving out the infidel, or of supposing that the mere wish and utterance were equivalent to the accomplishment.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE COMING OF MOULAI EL HAFID.

AUGUST 1907 was a momentous month in the history of Morocco, and was remarkable for three events of vital and far-reaching importance: (1) the bombardment of Casa Blanca and the landing of the French army; (2) the departure of Abdul Aziz from Fez; (3) the proclamation of Moulai el Hafid as Sultan at Marrackesh.

Immediately after the French army had landed the pent-up discontent against Abdul Aziz and the infidel broke loose all over Morocco. It was evident that the country was passing through a crisis the result of which it was impossible to foresee. The attitude of the Moors became so threatening that all Europeans settled in the interior were hastily recalled to the shelter of the coast towns. Even at Fez, the very centre of the Sultan's authority, the Marzhen officials declared they could no longer guarantee the safety of the European colony, and strongly advised that all should leave the capital for the time being. The foreign consuls agreed to this course, and early in August the entire European colony—

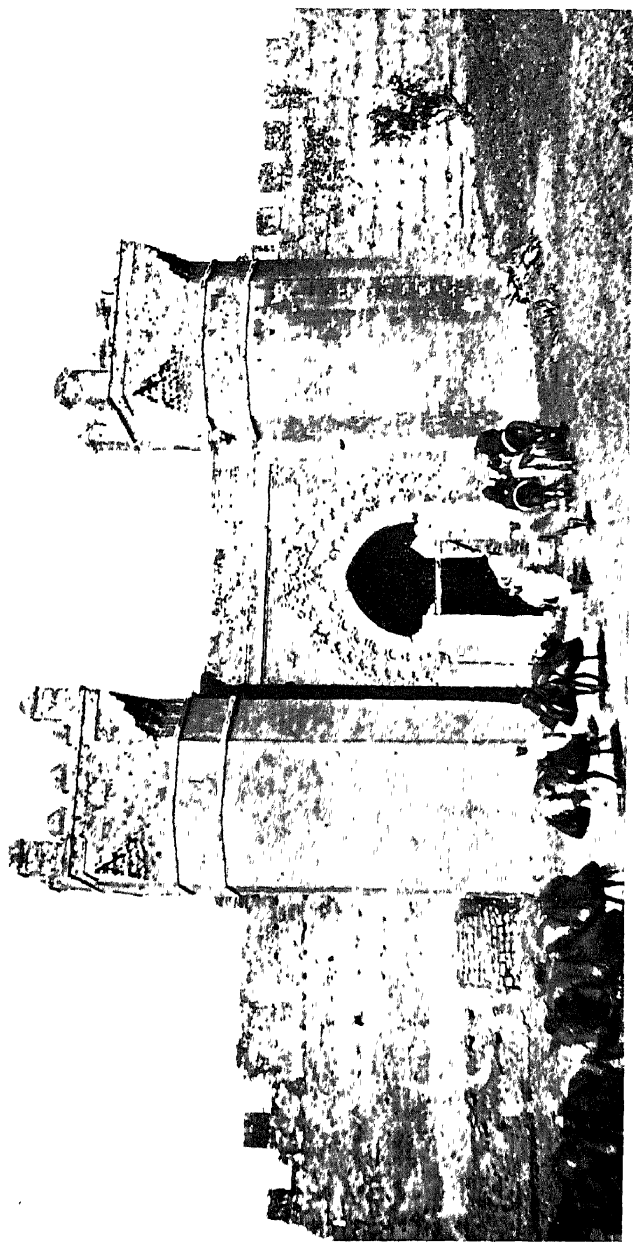
consuls, merchants, doctors, and missionaries, to the number of sixty—left Fez for Alcazar, under a strong escort of the Sultan's most reliable troops. They reached the coast in safety. This general exit was followed by one still more notable. The capital became too disturbed for the unfortunate Abdul Aziz. One by one his supporters had fallen away from him. His resources were almost at an end, and it was no longer in his power to raise loans and thus purchase the loyalty of his army. The hollow farce which had been going on for so long was at an end. The house was empty, the box-office was closed. The tribes round Fez were in open rebellion, and threatened to march on the capital. Abdul Aziz was openly denounced as that "Nazarene" in the streets of Fez, and the indignant population chided him with having sold his country to the infidel. In the midst of these misfortunes, against which Abdul Aziz, both by reason of his character and his upbringing, was entirely unable to make a stand, came the news that Moulai el Hafid, his elder half-brother, the governor of Marrackesh, had been proclaimed as Sultan by the second most important town in the Empire, and had been joined by the Glaui, the powerful Caid of the Atlas, and by Si Aissa Ben Omar, the Caid of Abda, and was already gaining many adherents from among the Southern tribes. This was the final blow, and it spurred on Abdul Aziz to take decisive steps to secure his own safety before it was too late. Under the pretext of making an expedition to punish the rebellious tribes and to

put down the revolt of his half-brother, he made up his mind to leave Fez and to journey to Rabat, which shares with Fez, Marrackesh, and Mekness the honour of being one of the royal residences of the Sultans of Morocco. There would have been nothing unusual in the Sultan choosing to spend the hot summer months at the coast had the times been ordinary. But the times were not ordinary—they were completely out of joint. Therefore when the Sultan announced his intentions, his beloved subjects understood quite well that it was the beginning of the end, and that their monarch was deserting them because he doubted his ability to ride the storm any longer. The most knowing among the Fasi whispered to each other they would never see him again in their midst, in spite of the Sultan's assurances that he would speedily return once he had vanquished the rebellious and forced the French to evacuate the Chaouia. The French army was then at Casa Blanca, the port adjacent to Rabat, and they could at any time march their army through the Chaouia and seize the town, under the pretext of protecting the lives and the property of Europeans. Already a great warship was anchored off the port, and the scared inhabitants wondered if she meant to bombard them as had been done at Casa Blanca. Thus when the Sultan announced his intention of going to Rabat, it was equivalent, in the eyes of his subjects, to placing himself under the protection of the French. From the moment he decided on making this journey the cause of Abdul Aziz was hopelessly lost. His subjects

would have nothing to do with him. Yet had he been a man of character and determination he might have saved his throne, or he might have made an attempt to do so, which would have entitled him to some small measure of respect. Had Abdul Aziz come forward, after the French army had landed, as the champion of an independent Morocco, the very existence of which was being threatened by foreign aggression, he would have rallied the rebellious tribes to his standard, and he could have assumed the rôle proper for the Sultan of Morocco, namely, the leadership of the Nationalist party. But Abdul Aziz, who could not rule in times of peace, was still less capable of guiding the helm of State in times of trouble. He had not got it in him to make a fight, and he preferred to leave the capital and to place himself under the protection of those who threatened the independence of his country. It was left to his brother, Moulai el Hafid,—whom Abdul Aziz at this time professed to despise,—to come forward as the head of the Nationalist party, and as the champion of an independent Morocco. No act could have done more to strengthen the cause of, and to bring adherents to, the banner of Moulai el Hafid than Abdul Aziz's journey to Rabat at this critical juncture.

Nevertheless the progress of Abdul Aziz from Fez to Rabat, if it did not exactly take the form of a triumphal procession, was a fitting finale to the twelve troubled, misspent years of his tenure of the throne. It aroused great

interest throughout Morocco, and also in Europe, because five years had passed since the Sultan had visited the coast and brought himself into personal contact with Europeans. Some declared Abdul Aziz would never reach Rabat, and that he would be killed or captured by the tribes *en route*. The Sultan seems to have had similar fears, for he made the most elaborate preparations to safeguard his person and his retinue from the attacks of the rebellious tribes. To enable the journey to be expeditious he travelled with a minimum of wives and concubines, and made a judicious selection of a few favourites from amongst the scores at Fez. The deserted ones saw him depart with loud lamentations, knowing they were left to the tender mercy of the first successful aspirant to the vacant throne. He collected together all the available cash in the State coffers, and with this he purchased the loyalty of a huge *mahalla* of soldiers and tribesmen. This great cavalcade of mounted men, 7000 strong, left Fez at the beginning of September, and after sundry adventures reached Rabat on September 14, — which is rapid travelling for a Sultan. The journey was not devoid of incident, for the weaker tribes had to be overawed and the loyalty of the powerful secured by extensive bribes. Abdul Aziz lost many of his followers on the road; for it was soon found that the promised pay was not regularly forthcoming, and many deserted and returned to their homes. Of the 7000 who left Fez about 4000 arrived at Rabat in a very discontented frame



*Gateway of the Ruins of Shella, Rabat.*



of mind at the absence of cash. Nevertheless the Sultan's entry into the town, past the old tombs of the Sultans and the ruins of Shella, surrounded by the picturesque and many-coloured horde of Arabs, was an imposing spectacle, and worthy of the highest traditions of the Shereefian throne. It looked more like the triumphant procession of a monarch beloved and honoured by his faithful subjects than the hasty flight of a Sultan who had lost all the respect and prestige attaching to his position. Abdul Aziz was destined to make just one more journey as Sultan of Morocco, —not, it is true, as an independent monarch, but under the ægis of the infidel ; and of the disastrous end I shall relate later.

Abdul Aziz's real troubles commenced after his arrival at Rabat. He established himself, with his women and a few faithful retainers, in a little white house hardly worthy of the name of palace, where the Sultan Moulai Hassan, his father, lies buried. His followers were camped on the open grassy plain outside the walls. Day by day their numbers diminished, as they grew tired of waiting for the promised pay that came not. Many dispersed to their homes, hurling invectives on a monarch who knew not how to keep his word ; many strolled about the town begging ; others wandered off into the Chaouia and joined the tribes who were fighting the French ; and the majority speedily sold their arms and ammunition to provide themselves with the necessities of life. The sands of Abdul Aziz's reign were rapidly running out when a ray of hope entered into his life by the announcement



that Monsieur Regnault, the French Minister, would visit him at Rabat.

But now I must leave the unfortunate Sultan and turn to his successor. Towards the end of August we heard various rumours at Casa Blanca that Moulai el Hafid had been proclaimed Sultan at Marrackesh. At first these reports were not believed, or no great importance was attached to them. The authority of Abdul Aziz was constantly being challenged, and this event was merely looked upon as one of those local outbreaks peculiar to the country and to its people. Who is this Moulai el Hafid? one heard asked. I could not find a person in Casa Blanca who had ever seen him, or who knew anything about his character. I could only learn that he was a half-brother of Abdul Aziz, and several years older than the Sultan. For many years he had represented the Sultan's authority in the government of Marrackesh, and was said to have performed his duties in a satisfactory manner and without undue oppression, and, as a natural corollary, he was popular with the people. It was also rumoured that he had considerable resources at his disposal in arms and ammunition, because, at the time of the great rebellion on the Sus, Abdul Aziz had despatched many thousand rifles to Marrackesh and much ammunition to enable his brother to put down the rising. But beyond these bare facts very little was known of the personal character of Moulai el Hafid, and still less of his prospects, and he was placed on a par with the Rogui, Raisuli, and a crowd of lesser rebels. But

it was not long before I received information from Masagan which enabled me to form a better judgment of the true state of affairs at the southern capital. I learnt that the troops had gone over in a solid body to Moulai el Hafid, and that many of the southern tribes had also pronounced in his favour. A little later came the tidings that the most powerful chief in all Morocco—the Glaui, Caid of the Atlas—had thrown in his lot with the Pretender, to give Hafid the title he bore at this time. The Glaui was followed by Si Aissa Ben Omar, the powerful Caid of Abda. Thus backed by two such important supporters, the rebellion of Moulai el Hafid began to assume formidable proportions. Mixed with the truth there was, of course, a great deal of falsehood as to his aims and policy. From the first he was painted as a fanatical savage, animated by a bitter hatred against the foreigner, who had already declared in favour of a Holy War, and who was about to invite all the tribes of Morocco to rise up and throw in their lot with him and drive the French army into the sea. Other reports said he would be content to remain in Marrackesh and rule as Sultan of the south, and thus Morocco would be partitioned between the two brothers. Others credited him with the intention of immediately marching on Fez, to be proclaimed there in place of his brother. But the majority believed at this time that it was Hafid's intention to come to the Chaouia to assist the tribesmen in their attacks on the French. Naturally the French were the

most interested parties, because their task in Morocco began to assume alarming though agreeable proportions, if they were called upon to restore order—not alone in the Chaouia, but also to fight a pretender backed by public opinion throughout the whole country. When reports reached Casa Blanca that Hafid had actually left Marrackesh, General Drude thought it was time to take precautions, and he threw up entrenchments round the town to be able to defend it against any sudden attack.

Thus in the early part of October the centre of interest shifted from Casa Blanca to Rabat, where Abdul Aziz had already arrived and Monsieur Regnault was daily expected. I bade farewell to General Drude and to the officers of the French army, from whom I parted with the utmost regret. I will never forget their many acts of kindness and hospitality. Admiral Philibert was himself going down to Rabat to meet Monsieur Regnault, and he was kind enough to invite me to accompany him in his flagship *La Gloire*.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE COURT OF ABDUL AZIZ AT RABAT.

ON the afternoon of October 6 a great warship steamed slowly down the coast of Morocco, and near sunset cast her anchor off the sacred city of Rabat. Hardly had the chain ceased to rattle ere a little 12-pounder roared forth a salute from the upper deck; a companion on the port side followed suit, and twenty-one times they spoke to the sacred city. Then the warship waited for the town's welcome, which was so delayed that it was thought she was forgotten.

"Where are your international manners?" the sailors asked. Then from the old fort, perched high on a rocky point overlooking the sea, at the mouth of the river Bouregreg, a great cloud of pure white smoke arose, and half a minute later the roar of the old smooth-bore, doubly charged with black powder, was borne to the warship. At irregular intervals the cannon of Rabat replied eleven times to the greeting of the French admiral; then there was a brief pause before the cannon of Sali, which stands as sentinel to the other side of the river, took up the toil of greeting

the stranger. Compared to the crisp half-charge bark of the 12-pounders there was something unnatural, a little mystic and sad, in the tremendous roar from those old-fashioned guns so potent a century ago. The sailors counted the shots until twenty-one had been fired, the number prescribed in the code of international etiquette, and they thought the farce was at an end, when from Sali there came a final report—a giant among pigmies in intensity of sound and in volume of smoke. It startled the warship,—departures from prescribed etiquette always do startle the agents of civilisation,—and a laugh ran round the crowded decks.

“They’ve fired one too many—they can’t count,” said a junior officer in a tone of slight contempt.

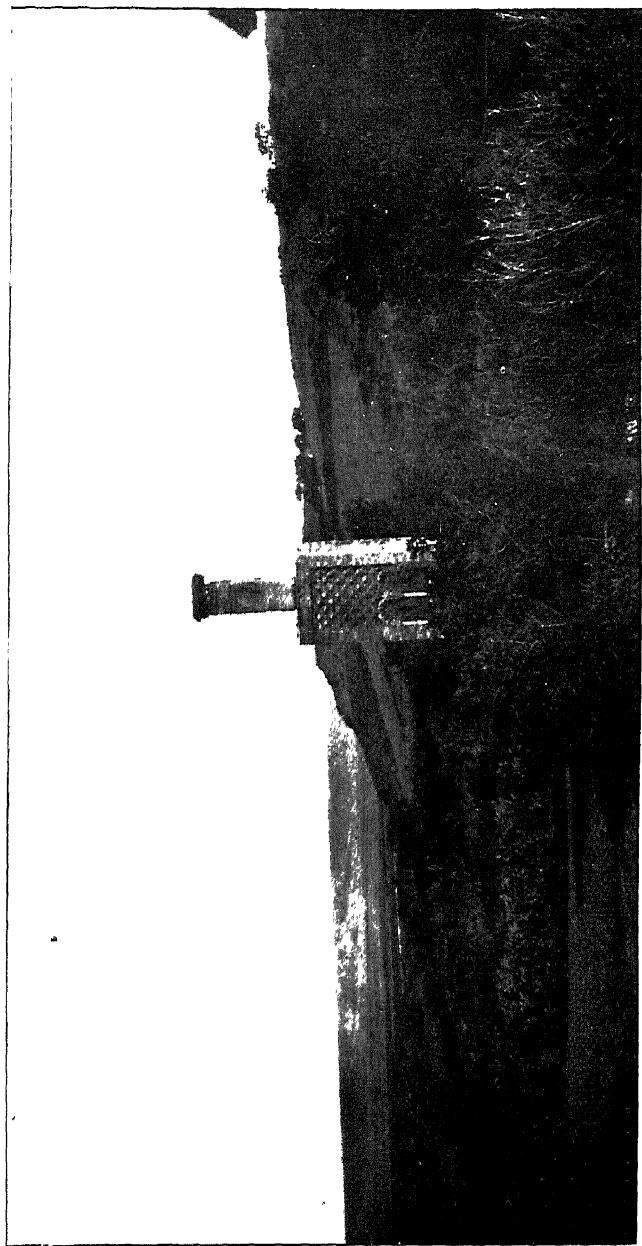
But to mere onlookers at this display of international manners that twenty-second shot possessed a significance of its own, for the report seemed like the last remonstrance of barbarism against the coming of an unwelcome civilisation. What were the thoughts of the Arab gunner as he rammed that final charge home? Did a voice whisper to him that he was about to sound the death-knell of Moroccan independence? The faithful gunner of Sali knew well—for does not his pay only reach him at irregular intervals in a debased coinage?—that his master was in need of money, and for that reason he had invited the warship to Rabat. He needed gold, coined by the infidel, to support his tottering throne, threatened by his own subjects. This is always a last re-

source of a doomed minor monarchy — the last artifice of a feeble king supported by feebler ministers: for, like strychnine, which keeps the heart of the sufferer beating long enough for him to settle his earthly affairs, the borrowed gold of civilisation supports the decaying dynasties of semi-barbarism until the time arrives for seizure and control.

The roar of the guns brought the people from their homes and the warriors from their camp to forgather on the hills, which, rising straight up from the water, oppose a rocky rampart to the intruder, and from there to gaze in wonder and admiration on the warship. Her crew leaning over the rails in idle curiosity saw before them a scene of surprising barbaric splendour. They gazed on Sali, its thick wall dotted with cannon, which glowered from embrasures centuries old; on its white flat-topped houses and tall minarets, the whole sullen and aloof, separated from more tolerant Rabat by the angry bar at the river's mouth. For centuries Sali has remained the same, an enemy of Christianity and civilisation, and still the most fanatical town in Morocco, just as Robinson Crusoe found it when held there a prisoner for two years by the two Barbary pirates before setting out on his historic voyage. The Atlantic rollers breaking in cascades of spray at the mouth of the river mark the bar; then comes Rabat, standing as its sentinel, a jumble of rock forts and houses, nature and man's work difficult to distinguish. The hills which front the ocean are thickly dotted with the tombs of former

generations of the faithful. Beneath the soil lie those who laughed at the infidel and bade him defiance from the walls of the sacred city,—men who were accustomed to charge their cannon with shot, not to salute strangers as welcome guests. The tombs remain, but the spirit of the heroic age has fled, the bow of Allah is unstrung, and the faithful wander ashamed amidst the scenes of their former glory. The hills beyond are spread with white tents clustering round a great striped one, the home of the Sultan when on the march. Beyond, and towering over all, stands the Hassan tower, emblem of a great Sultan who did rule, crumbling with neglect, but still upright amidst the general decay of mind and matter. Among the tents, houses, and tombs the Sultan's warriors wandered, and wondered what the presence of the great warship could mean.

But after a cursory glance at objects of interest, the eyes of all involuntarily turned towards the line of white foam which divides Sali from Rabat. The bar is symbolical of Morocco's rocky coast. The only question ever asked by the traveller about the sacred city is, "Will it be possible to land?" "Can the bar be crossed?" When the autumn gales set in, the Atlantic rollers breaking over the silt at the river's mouth render it impossible to land, and the bar has been closed for two months at a stretch. This is why Morocco, within three hours' easy steaming from Europe, has remained in a state of medieval barbarism: there are no harbours, and consequently little commerce. From Tangier to Mogador there is no



*The Tombs of the Sultans at Rabat.*





sheltered anchorage—nothing for the merchant-vessel save the open roadstead and the threatening lee shore ; there are no quays—all merchandise must be landed in barges, and during the winter even this slow and precarious process has to be abandoned. Now, as civilisation only follows the merchant, who so far has found little to tempt him, Morocco has been sadly neglected, for no country ever undertakes the moral and material salvation of another purely for the love of doing a good action. Thus the Moors have been able to lead the life for which they are best suited by their temperament and surroundings. Dynasty has succeeded dynasty ; there have always been pretenders, rivals, rebels, internecine warfare, oppression, brutality, slavery, and the thousand other tyrannies which the Oriental, in the eyes of the European philanthropist (after the merchant has installed himself), is suffered to groan under.

Yet this strange medley of tribes, constantly fighting amongst themselves, setting up rival chiefs, refusing to pay taxes, and acknowledging no master, is held together by the most durable of all bonds—a common faith. Hatred of the infidel is still paramount in the breast of the faithful, and it is the only national cry left to the Mahommedan. The failure to realise this, and to utilise the immense power which lies behind such vehement fanaticism, has cost Abdul Aziz his throne, and may eventually cost Morocco her independence. The occupation of Casa Blanca by the French was the last opportunity to bring all the discordant elements into line. The great

man would have placed himself at the head of the nation and declared a Holy War on the infidel. All the petty bickerings, jealousies, and internecine strife would have vanished before the Prophet's own call to arms.

But Abdul Aziz has missed flood-tide, if indeed nature has endowed him with qualities necessary to steer the barque of State through the troubled waters of an international struggle, with a crew mutinous and discontented. His eyes were always fixed on his present necessities, not on the future : he required gold for himself, his harem, and to satisfy the greed of his viziers ; gold to buy motor-cars, photographs, phonographs, sewing-machines, dolls, toys, and other trumperies of civilisation which seduce the degenerate Oriental. The state of his country mattered not, so long as the infidel could provide the gold.

On the day of her arrival the warship could not land her envoys, as the sea was rough and the line of foam across the bar laughed back defiance. It was Nature's last warning to barbarism ; the waves breaking over the bar seemed to whisper of the evils to come, once the infidel was allowed to land. But the faithful looked on in apathy, thinking the day to be written in the unchangeable Book of Fate. The breakers, having done their duty, calmed down, and the Mission of civilisation was able to land. A great surf-barge, manned by twenty-four of the sturdiest children of the Prophet, put out from shore, eagerly watched by thousands on land and sea. After a prolonged struggle with the subsiding breakers

—still muttering an angry disapproval—the barge passed the surf, and was towed to the warship by a steam-pinnace. The chief of the Mission, arrayed in a dress-suit, embarked, attended by a brilliant crowd of naval and military officers. They descended into the barge with the dignity befitting their rank and their mission, but oh! in what a state of misery they landed. The Atlantic rollers are very democratic, and where they break over the bar at Rabat there is a strong suspicion of Socialism in their conduct. The proud and the humble, ministers and clerks, generals and privates, are alike tumbled into a discordant, unhappy, sea-sick mass, all made equal for one short hour by a common misery, Nature's only Socialist. The Mahommedan crew took their precious burden through the surf, singing loud praises to Allah, and calling upon him plaintively for protection whenever a great wave threatened to overwhelm them. Better, perhaps, for their monarch and for the independence of Morocco had the Prophet overturned the barge and buried all in the angry waters; but it is written in the Book of Fate that the Mission was to land, and that the independence of Morocco is to gradually pass away.

The true character of a monarch is never known until he finds himself face to face with difficulties. As a rule, the king is only seen on days of processions and great solemnities, in a fine uniform, attended by faithful guards, and cheered by his loyal subjects. The trials and misfortunes, like the power of a constitutional monarch, are strictly

limited; his duties are carefully defined; over the finances of his state he has no control, and consequently no anxiety, while his own are carefully regulated and are generally sufficient for his needs. His sole power lies in his personal influence, and in that mysterious pulling of the strings behind the scenes. But how different is the lot of the absolute monarch, for he bears on his shoulders not only his private troubles but also the cares of State. The responsibility for everything lies with him, and all the praise or all the blame is his. Surely no absolute monarch ever found himself in a more difficult or miserable position than Abdul Aziz, Sultan of Morocco, whose dominions stretched from the Atlas to Algeria, from the Sahara to the Atlantic, and who was supposed to hold the sceptre over eight millions of the faithful! In reality his authority extended at the time in a very uncertain manner to about half a mile beyond the particular place in which he happened to be. On his journey from Fez his dominions stretched in a small circle round the great tent in which he slept; while the outskirts of his camp were nightly plundered by his loyal subjects who dwell beside the road. On arriving at Rabat he found himself the nominal ruler over a small, white, flat-roofed palace, and half a mile of green turf, on which were pitched the tents of his few remaining soldiers. The tribesmen, who formed the irregular mounted escort which accompanied him from Fez, had long since departed to their homes, while many

had sold their rifles to the discontented Chaouia tribes in order to buy bread. The lonely monarch at Rabat presented a pathetic figure, which must command the sympathies and deserves the serious study of his fellow-kings in this democratic age. Born in the purple, but with a character totally unfitted to hold the sceptre of royalty in a country where intellect is ever secondary to brute force, Abdul Aziz found himself at the age of twenty-eight in the following unfortunate position. Six thousand infidels were entrenched within forty miles of his sacred capital; their warships lay anchored with their guns trained on his sea-board towns; in the south, a rival monarch—his own half-brother—had set himself up, and threatened to march on Fez or to attack him at Rabat; in the north is a pretender, long quiet, but now seizing the moment of general unrest to assert his claims; his trusty adviser was held a prisoner by Raisuli, who practised open brigandage and extortion; his exchequer was empty; his State jewels were on their way to Europe to be pawned; his few remaining warriors were ready to desert the moment they could find a master who would pay them more than two days out of seven; and at his side was an unwelcome Republican, his pockets bulging with the Act of Algeciras. Surely this tale of misfortune is sufficient to break the most indomitable spirit.

To the Oriental, the reputed antidote to sorrow and misfortune is philosophy, but how often is the remedy capable of curing, and how often

does it drive reflection away? There are few who can so elevate their minds above their material surroundings as to regard with perfect equanimity and indifference the changes of fortune and prosperity. Now, as philosophy is the Occidental panacea in misfortune, so also is an implicit belief in predestination the Oriental antidote. In the selection of predestination as his chief article of faith, what consummate wisdom and foresight the Prophet displayed, for who would change the comfort of that pernicious doctrine for all the solace of philosophy and the spiritual calm of the higher morality of Europe? But predestination contains the fatal germs of enervation and decay, for it is a doctrine of *laissez-faire*, indifference and sloth. As the conception of Mahommedanism, it was the most useful weapon in the Prophet's armoury, for it could be used to explain his failures and to satisfy the incredulity of his followers when things went wrong. When all went well but little was heard of it. Its baneful effects on later generations of the faithful were not apparent when the Arabs were struggling to establish their dominion over the decaying Roman Empire, and swept forward in an irresistible flood of fanaticism. While success hovered over the Crescent, there was little inducement to flaunt this limitation of human prowess before the world; and the successive Mahommedan conquerors were quite content to take the credit of their unexampled victory and spoliation. But the doctrine became fatal

after the early energy of Islam had spent itself, and the descendants of the conquerors began to enjoy the ordinary life of settled communities. The vitality of the Mahommedan world is very low at the present day; and while Christian nations are progressing in all branches of human endeavour, Mahommedan countries are standing still or relapsing into greater darkness. How can this decay be explained? It is not mental or physical, for the life of the Arab is far more conducive to health and vitality than that of the average Christian. Surely the real cause is the fatal lassitude engendered by an unchanging belief in an ordained future. The old age of nations is rarely dignified, but Mahomet found a certain method of making the declining years of Mahommedan monarchies tolerable. The evils which predestination inflicts on communities, and the comfort it brings to the individual mind and conscience, are clearly visible in the present state of Morocco. What Occidental monarch could bear such a burden of calamity on his shoulders as was borne by Abdul Aziz? The unhappy state of his country, the miseries of his subjects, and the precarious condition of his own affairs, would surely overwhelm a Christian king. How his conscience would reproach him! If an absolute monarch, he would blame himself for the misfortune he has brought on the State; if a limited monarch, he would deplore his inability to intervene. Richard II., when he found his throne gradually slipping away from his feeble



hands, derived a little ray of comfort by reflecting on the divine right of kings.

“Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm from an anointed king!”

he exclaims. Now the position of Abdul Aziz was every whit as bad as that of Richard II.; but whereas the latter's cup of sorrow was filled to overflowing, the former was perfectly happy and regarded the future with equanimity. He also says—

“Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm from an anointed king!”

But he adds the important proviso, “unless it is otherwise written in the Book of Fate—a matter in which I am in nowise concerned.” This adds enormously to his comfort, for it soothes his conscience, and marks the essential difference between the agony of a Richard II. and the peace of mind of an Abdul Aziz.

But this fatal doctrine, although in the darkest hour it may drive away the pangs of reflection and bring comfort and a spirit of resignation to the monarch's mind, is fatal to the interests of his subjects and to the independence of his country. For as it brings relief to a reflective mind, and silences the reproaches of conscience, so also does it banish thoughts of action,—for what matter can be altered by action, unless, indeed, the effort itself is regarded as predestined in the Book of Fate?—an unlikely contingency when dealing with a man of weak physique and

indolent habits, born, nourished, and trained in the softening atmosphere of the harem.

But what a beautiful serenity this doctrine of an ordained future casts over Eastern communities! The steady unchanging flow down the tide of time towards a settled end, which no human action can direct or alter, the apathy of the people to the greatest events and changes, the patience of the Oriental, the absence of hurry, and the feeling that all the present and all eternity is yours, spring from the same fatal source, beautiful to look upon and to be near, but poisonous to the vitality of the individual and to the progress of peoples. There are no nerves in the East—none of the stress, the competition, and the restlessness of the great cities of Europe or of the New World,—simply because nerves, rush, and restlessness are incompatible with predestination.

The actual participants in world events enjoy—except at rare intervals—little of the concentrated interest and excitement experienced by those who read about them from a distance. The crowded columns of a newspaper contain the essence of all that is not ordinary in the lives of individuals and in the progress of nations, served up in a form calculated to attract the eye of the sensation lover. But to those on the spot, departures from the normal are so intermingled with the normal that their relative importance in history, and their far-reaching effects, are often lost. To the spectator there is little distinction between a royal procession and a revolution. Negotiations, secret

intrigues, and ministerial conferences, which make or alter the destinies of nations, are carried on behind closed doors unnoticed by, and of small interest to, the majority of mankind. Thus, in spite of the unhappy state of Morocco, there was little which caught the eye at Rabat to bring home the full gravity of the crisis through which the country was passing. The life of the people flowed on just as it had done for centuries; and, being an Oriental crowd, there was not even those evidences of unrest which would be apparent under similar circumstances in a Western community. In reality, how little is the life of the masses affected by any of the changes which go to make history! It is only the small minority of the governing class, the party-man and the place-man, who experience to the full the trials, passions, and tricks of fortune which spring from changes in ministries, or the substitution of one form of government for another. If their religion is not interfered with, and as long as their material condition remains the same, it matters but little to the majority who guides the helm of State. This is the more true in a purely agricultural country like Morocco, where all are supported by the fertility of the soil, the fruitfulness of which is independent of ministries, the intrigues of the palace, the vicissitudes of viziers, and the relations between the head of the State and foreign Powers.

Apathy reigned in Rabat after the first novelty of the French Mission had worn off. The ancient walled town, whose prosperity waned when science,

in the guise of steamboats, put an end to successful piracy, only wakes up from her lethargy when her monarch pays one of his infrequent visits. On this occasion he was accompanied by a great *mahalla* to guard his sacred person, and, what was of more importance to the citizens of Rabat, that *mahalla* was being paid at the princely rate (for Morocco) of two days for seven. All this money found its way into the little booths which serve as shops, where the Jew, the effete town Moor, the broken-down European, and negroes of all shades, sit side by side. No article is too humble for the retailer, and the poorest can buy according to his means. Thus there are hawkers in the streets who sell you six matches at a time, in case you cannot afford an entire box. What a study in types and characters the streets of Rabat afforded as the Sultan's warriors, some mounted, some on foot, but each man carrying his rifle—for no man dare leave this, the most cherished of all possessions in Morocco, for a moment, lest his neighbour steals it,—hurried from one little store to another, a prey to the avarice and cupidity of the Jew, the town Moor, the European, and the negro. Through the crowded streets sad-faced camels, looking as if they bore on their shoulders the accumulated sins of ages; mules laden with the produce of the country; water-carriers with their goat-skins thrown over their shoulders, and tinkling their little bells,—force their way; while a babel of strange tongues, discordant shouts, and the unceasing prayers to Allah, added a fitting atmosphere to the scene. The houses of

the many consuls, of the members of the Mission, and of the principal Caid's were guarded by little groups of soldiers, each man carrying a rifle with the bayonet fixed. They cannot be trusted with cartridges, either selling them to the first bidder or using them against those with whom they have been unable to make a satisfactory bargain. A riot ensues, a precious European is hurt; then come more fleets, more soldiers, and more gentlemen in dress-suits, with presentation diamond rings in one hand and limitations of liberty in the other. The soldiers are typical of everything in Morocco—chaotic, humorous, incondite; and they show the evils and the comic side of Europe's meddling. Formerly there were English, German, and French instructors at Fez, but each in turn realised the utter futility of attempting to create an army under the existing *régime*. The result has been a strange one: there are soldiers who march like English Guardsmen, and who wear a uniform not dissimilar; there are others trained to the stiff German goose-step, who sport a green uniform which resembles that of the Kaiser's troops; and yet others drilled by the French, also wearing a distinctive dress. The discipline and drill have long since been forgotten; only tattered uniforms, an upright carriage, a more regular step, and the slight swagger peculiar to all, whether Christians, Mahommedans, or heathens, who have once worn a uniform, remain as a memorial of the instructor's wasted efforts. The Moorish army resembles some stage troupe undergoing its first dress rehearsal,

when the supers are neither accustomed to their kit nor at home with their surroundings.

Yet this strange medley of races and tribes remains true to the commands of the Prophet, and for a month each year every man, woman, and child above the age of twelve touches no food and drink between the hours of sunrise and sunset. What a trial of endurance this is for even the strongest constitution, accustomed to its three recognised and numerous supplementary meals a-day! The month of Ramadan runs the circle of the year, and the ordeal is therefore more exhausting in the summer than in the winter, for it means abstinence from water throughout the hottest hours of the day. What other prophet can rely on the faithful observance of such an exacting faith? This prolonged fast is bad for the health and spirits, and towards the end of Ramadan the mass of the people are irritable to a degree: servants are so reduced that they can hardly struggle through their duties; and industry almost comes to a standstill, for the majority of the faithful are asleep when they should be up and doing, having passed the night in revels and excesses, natural offsprings of starved and miserable days. Yet down through twelve centuries no seer has arisen to question the wisdom of executing to the letter these stringent commands; no learned college has attempted to put other interpretation on the Prophet's words; and no great chief has taken the responsibility—naturally a popular one—of relieving his followers from this

onerous article of their faith. This is neither the time nor the place to compare the advantages and practical morality of various creeds, but what other religion can compare with the Mahommedan in the severity of the sacrifices it demands from its followers? what other doctrine has twelve hundred years of such unbroken observance behind it? The behaviour of the people of Morocco during the cruel month of Ramadan is surely a great lesson in faith and self-sacrifice, and one is tempted to ask, Are they men and women like ourselves, or are they, through the long observance of strict formula throughout twelve centuries, devoid of all feelings and passions? But the human element of the Arabs was seen at sunset during Ramadan at Rabat. Near that hour the people gather in hundreds round the old fort overlooking the sea. Some carry basins of food, others pitchers of water. At sunset a gun, doubly charged with black powder so that it may be heard all over the town, is fired. The waiting multitude, uttering wild shouts of joy, either eat their food on the spot, or disperse to their homes, like children released from school. Then it is you realise how much they have suffered during the long fast.

It would be natural to suppose that a people who are capable of foregoing for an entire month each year all corporeal comforts and luxuries, would be possessed of an individual and national character cast in such a heroic mould that any encroachment on, or interference with, their liberty would be an impossibility. What, then,

has caused the Arabs of Morocco to decline from world conquerors to a feeble collection of predatory tribes, still strong in the observance of dogma, but weak in all else? Partly, no doubt, it is the natural decay which overwhelms all nations in turn; partly the decay which seems to dissolve all conquering hordes when the wave of conquest has spent its force or breaks itself in vain upon impossible barriers, and the sounder qualities necessary for the establishment of permanent empires on the pathway of peaceful progression are wanting. But the Arabs were not merely vulgar hordes of savages who carried all before them by brute force, and who planted none of the seeds of enlightenment and progress. At the darkest period of medieval history, when all learning and culture seemed dead in Europe, the spark of science and culture was kept burning at Fez and Cordova, and it was the rays of Arab learning and philosophy which pierced the gloom of Europe's ignorance. But the awakening of Europe seems to have been fatal to Mahommedan progression, and since that period Morocco has stood still, and even retrograded.

On my arrival at Rabat I sought an audience with the Sultan. I was interested to see how the harassed man bore himself in the midst of his misfortunes, and I thought his deportment and attitude towards life might supply the secret of Morocco's decline and Mahommedan decay. I asked for an audience with considerable misgivings, for I knew grave matters of State occupied his attention, and I expected either a refusal or to



endure the typical Oriental delay before receiving a definite reply. But to my surprise, on the following morning I was commanded to be at the palace at 2 P.M. that same afternoon. The Sultan speaks no French or English, and it was necessary to have an interpreter who could speak Arabic, and I was happy in finding a friend to play this thankless *rôle*. At the appointed hour we were outside the palace gate: it is not etiquette to knock or to ring, and you must wait until someone who has been notified of your arrival passes you in. After a long delay we came to the conclusion that we had either been forgotten or that we were at the wrong gate. A short gallop took us to the other side of the palace, rather late for our appointment. This time we were successful. A dusky attendant motioned us to dismount, our horses were held by soldiers, and we were ushered into the imperial garden through a small postern. We followed our guide to a small outbuilding, and here he held up his hand as a signal for us to halt while he entered the house. A moment later he returned, his face wreathed in smiles, showing he had gazed on the well-beloved, his Imperial Master. He made me leave my camera on a flower-bed, and then bowed us into a little, bare, whitewashed room, about 10 feet by 12,—a kind of summer-house, where you expect to find a few stringless racquets, some chipped croquet-balls, and a machine for marking tennis-courts. The sudden transition from bright sunlight to inner darkness somewhat confused me, and a few seconds elapsed before I realised we were not alone, and

that a man was standing in the centre of the room, close to three plain wooden chairs. Seeing my companion bow, I knew I must be in the Imperial presence, and did likewise three times, which I had been told was the correct number. His Majesty smiled in a most engaging manner, and shook hands with us both.

Abdul Aziz is not a pure Arab, for his mother was a Circassian, and he is much more swarthy than is usual with his countrymen. His face is covered with dark hair, and he wears a short beard which conceals his weak chin; his forehead is good; his eyes are very fine, and continually light up as he becomes interested; but unfortunately his face is much disfigured by small-pox. He wore the ordinary dress of the Moors—a long white outer robe with a hood, which he turned up over his red fez, which was very large, coming down to his eyes and covering half his ears. During the time I was with him he continually pushed back the fez and hood with his right hand and scratched his forehead.

When I remembered the wretched state of his country, the discontent of his subjects, and the precarious condition of his own fortunes, I expected to find the troubles and despairing misery of a Richard II. stamped on his imperial brow; but in this I was agreeably mistaken, for, instead, I found the life and hope and joy of an Alfonso. He beckoned us to be seated, saying, "You have just come from Casa Blanca; they tell me you have seen the fighting. Have you any photographs? If so, I would like to see them."

I had a collection with me, for I had been warned he had a great fondness for photographs, and sometimes takes them himself. The Sultan examined them carefully, and marked what each represented on the back in Arabic. My friend leaned towards me and whispered, "He means to keep them." This came as rather a shock, for of many I had no duplicates. I asked him to tell his Majesty I would send a collection from Tangier in an album. This satisfied the Sultan, and he handed them back. He then asked a series of questions.

*Sultan.* "Did the Chaouia tribes fight bravely?"

I replied, "Yes," which made his eyes sparkle with pleasure.

*Sultan.* "Did the French fight bravely?"

"Yes—especially the officers, who always stand up in action and take no cover."

*Sultan.* "I cannot understand any one going to war who is not obliged to: I am sure I'd be very frightened. But tell me, if the Chaouia tribes had put more men in the field, would the French have sent reinforcements?"

"Yes; I feel sure they would."

*Sultan.* "I hear the Foreign Legion have French, German, English, and other nationalities serving in the ranks,—so my people have been fighting all Europe."

I explained that the majority were French or Germans, and that there were but very few Englishmen—for they have plenty of opportunities for fighting in the colonies.

*Sultan.* "Did the field-guns do much harm?"

Because they tell me the big shells from the warships did not."

I replied that the field-guns using shrapnel did more harm than the shells from the warships.

*Sultan.* "What is a shrapnel?"

He was astonished when I told him each shell contained 300 bullets, and that the area of destruction was 250 yards by 20 yards; and that the Arabs, discovering this fact, rode in small parties thirty or forty yards apart so as to localise the effect of each shell. This interested him, and he repeatedly nodded his head in approval of their sagacity.

*Sultan.* "You have seen the Japanese fight? Are my people as brave?"

This pertinent question placed me in an awkward dilemma, for I had either to suppress the truth or offend his Majesty. I decided to sacrifice the former, and replied, "Yes; but they have not the same training, skill, or tenacity of purpose."

His Majesty has a keen sense of humour, and laughed heartily when I told him the story of the Arab who found an unexploded six-inch shell. He took it home, summoned his family and relatives in great pride, and requisitioned the services of the blacksmith to open it in their presence. The latter proceeded to bang in the top with a hammer. At the third blow it exploded!

Up to this time the Sultan had asked me repeated questions, and I had no opportunity of putting any to him. But now there was a pause, and I ventured to ask him his views on the

present state of Morocco. He hesitated a little, his face became serious, and when he spoke it was with great dignity.

"Naturally, I am distressed by these troubles; but if God so wills it, I trust all will come right in the end. Then I will be able to proceed with reforms which recent events have postponed. During the last two years a press has sprung up in this country, consequently a public opinion has arisen, and people are beginning to think for themselves. I have been greatly upset by all that has occurred at Casa Blanca, but I will not attempt to lay the responsibility."

The last part of the sentence was accompanied by an expressive shrug of the shoulders. Now I ventured on very dangerous ground, and asked what his Majesty thought of Moulai el Hafid. For a few seconds he made no reply, and I began to think he was offended; then a faint smile crept over his face, and he looked up, speaking with great animation, almost with fierceness.

"We do not fear him; his cause is not making progress. Why, in order to obtain followers he was obliged to declare a Holy War, which I alone have the right to do; then he went about saying I was responsible for the occupation of Casa Blanca."

At this point the Sultan stopped short and laughed outright, for I think his own vehemence had astonished him.

"Will your Majesty shortly march against Moulai el Hafid?" I asked.

Again he smiled. "No, certainly not: at

present the affairs of Morocco are in the hands of diplomats: when diplomacy fails it will be time enough to consider that question."

"Does your Majesty think the tribes round Casa Blanca will remain peaceful now they have given in their submission?"

Again he became serious, and answered very deliberately—

"If the French leave Casa Blanca I will guarantee the Chaouia remains peaceful; but if they stay, I fear there will be continual troubles during the winter."

He repeated the same words twice with emphasis.

"But," I asked, "will not the fast of Ramadan keep the tribes quiet during the next month?"

"I'm afraid there are many Arabs who don't keep the fast in times of trouble," he answered with a laugh.

He now became tired of politics, and turned the conversation on to a variety of lighter topics.

"I want," he said, "above all things, to visit England; but at present there seems small chance of my doing so. However, we never know what destiny holds in store. I like Englishmen, and I can always recognise them immediately, for they are different to all other peoples. I have an English doctor; and in my palace at Fez I have nothing but English things."

"Is your Majesty fond of travelling?" I asked.

"No, it tires me; and it is very difficult, be-

cause I have to take so many tents and people with me. When your king travels he stays with his subjects, does he not? But I cannot do that; so I have either to stay in one of my palaces, or else in the big tent you have seen outside."

"Does your Majesty feel keeping the fast of Ramadan very much?"

"Yes; I only take food twice in the twenty-four hours—once just before and once just after sunset."

The Sultan's keen sense of humour is proverbial; he appreciates every point of a story, and laughs heartily. I told him how the Spanish cavalry were bathing on the beach at Casa Blanca, when the *Gloire* commenced to shell a party of Arabs over their heads. One six-inch shell burst prematurely on leaving the muzzle of the gun, churning up the water with flying fragments of steel, some of which whizzed close by the Spaniards. The latter, thinking they were attacked, retired hastily into the town. I asked him if he had ever heard of Robinson Crusoe, and he replied, "Yes." Then I related how he had been imprisoned at Sali for two years, and that Mr Harris, the special correspondent of 'The Times,' was going to collect a party and search for the house in which he was imprisoned. When it was found he was going to telegraph the news to England, and suggest it should be bought by the nation. This pleased the Sultan greatly. He said, "That is just like Harris." He then volunteered a story of his own. "Yesterday," he said, "all the French correspondents came to see me

together, and they asked me many questions about Morocco, and what was going to happen in the future. 'Gentlemen,' I said, 'you ought to be able to tell me better than I can tell you!'"

"What do you think of the position of Caid Maclean?" The Sultan made a little gesture of despair, and spoke sadly.

"I approve of all measures which will secure his speedy release, for I only wish to see him again."

He rose as a signal the audience was at an end. I wanted to take his photograph, but my companion said he did not think he would allow me to do so during Ramadan, but he was good enough to ask. The Sultan immediately consented, and stepped out into the bright sunlight of the garden. I took one picture, then shut up the camera, not liking to trouble him further, but he stopped me and said—

"Take two or three; for the destinies of photographs, like those of empires, are uncertain."

He held out his hand, then vanished through a little door into his harem; and as I heard a woman's laugh a few moments later, I suppose he had already begun to entertain his ladies with an account of what had passed.

We made our way through the garden to the outer gate amidst an avenue of bowing, obsequious officials, who, taking their cue from the long period we had passed with their sovereign—over an hour and a-half,—treated us with the utmost respect.

I felt after I had left the palace that I had



learnt the secret which explains the decay of Morocco and the decline of Mahommedan vitality. All who come in contact with Abdul Aziz are struck by the charm of his personality, his keen intelligence, his extensive knowledge of men and matters, and his delightful sense of humour—qualities which go to make the great monarch. Why, then, was Abdul Aziz such a lamentable failure as a ruler? and why has Morocco sunk into chaos and decay? The answer is not far to seek. It is partly due to defects in his own character, partly to the evils of the system under which he ruled, which develop and accentuate those defects. The absolute monarch, even though possessing a great personality, surrounded by favourites, who are generally flatterers (for thus is weak human nature constituted), seldom hears the truth or finds himself in touch with his subjects. His gaze cannot pierce the mists of intrigue and self-interest which environ all his actions. When he thinks he is ordering affairs to please his subjects and to benefit his country, he is but playing into the hands of a small clique, who throw dust into his eyes. . But the evils of the system are only seen at their worst in an Oriental country where there is no press, and consequently no public opinion to equipoise the malign influence of the favourites who surround the throne; and the evils are exaggerated in an incredible degree when the character of the Oriental monarch is weak. In spite of his high intelligence, Abdul Aziz was but a feeble monarch; and he was entirely under the thumb of successive

favourites, chosen, not for their ability to govern, but for their capacity to tickle with fresh allurements the capricious levity of their sovereign. Thus the Sultan was incapable of carrying out his cherished reforms, for he has neither the moral courage nor the physical energy : all his abilities were squandered on the small things of life that pleased ; and his knowledge of men, affairs, and the necessities of his country, instead of being put to practical use, were dissipated in the lighter and more congenial atmosphere of the harem. But borne up by an implicit belief in an ordained future, which no action of his can direct or modify, Abdul Aziz met every extreme of fortune in a spirit of kingly resignation.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE TROUBLES OF A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

THE life of a war correspondent is of absorbing interest, and those who have once experienced the glories of the game require considerable strength of mind to abandon it for another. But I would advise no one to deliberately choose such a career. In the first place, let the aspirant make sure that he possesses the necessary qualities that go to make success. Your opportunities do not come, they have to be created, and you may take up a journalist's career and remain at it all your life without taking part in a war or any other event of surpassing interest. Remember it is always important to be on the spot where the centre of interest happens to be. The editor of the newspaper hates the sight of a war correspondent when he sees him in the Strand or in Fleet Street. He thinks of the awful cost of the cables, of the enormous travelling expenses, and of the monstrous camp-equipment which the special will require. Therefore, those who intend to enter this most difficult and uncertain of all arenas should remember that the old axiom which

Grouchy failed to follow at Waterloo, and which consequently cost Napoleon that battle, of “Allez au feu,” is peculiarly applicable to war correspondents. Study the situation and hasten to the spot. If you are the only person who has seen a battle, felt an earthquake, or who has been mixed up in a riot, remember that the same editor who treated you with ill-disguised alarm and abruptness in Fleet Street will regard you for the time being as his dearest friend, if you will only give him the exclusive information by wire. But this is just at the commencement of a campaign, and your real difficulties begin when your rivals reach the field, and all are engaged in competing against one another. When the clever old hands, whose names are household words, are assembled, the fun really commences. Then you have an opportunity of showing your worth and of outwitting your rivals. But nowadays there is not so much of this personal competition as there used to be. The liberties of the war correspondent are carefully defined, and even the number of words he may send a day is carefully fixed by the military authorities, and the exact hours at which these despatches can be sent are also in the instructions with which each is furnished. At least this was the case during the Russo-Japanese War, and the precedent is likely to be followed in the wars of the future. In this age, even if you are stranded on a desert island, you are almost certain to find a telegraph station, or at least a wire to tap, and therefore it is very difficult to obtain the exclusive use of

anything. Nevertheless, occasional opportunities do arrive for you to enlighten the public on some critical question ahead of your rivals. But it often happens that the public do not care in the least for something you have taken an immense amount of time and trouble to obtain, and it is essential for the war correspondent to know what is likely to be of interest to the public and where to find it. It is heart-breaking to send off the news of some engagement, only to get a cable back a day later—"You have sent two thousand words, when five hundred would suffice"; or the brief, "Curtail; public no longer interested." When you get a despatch like this, you know that something of extraordinary interest has been happening at home. A body has been found in a lonely tunnel in peaceful Surrey; Hayward has made a century at the Oval; a Scotsman's wife has transgressed; or a Cup-tie has been played off. But these little disappointments are all part of the game, and the war correspondent's real trouble is trying to decide what particular point on the compass of events he shall make for. There is no suffering equal to that produced by indecision and uncertainty. Whilst I was at Casa Blanca there came a lull in the operations after the two Arab attacks on the town had been repulsed. Suddenly rumours came that there was about to be an outbreak at Masagan, and that the French warships were hastening down the coast to bombard the town. This created immense excitement at Casa Blanca, and of course it was the duty of the correspondent to be on the

spot. A boat was leaving that very morning for Masagan, and an old friend of mine, of great experience, decided to go down by it, and advised me to do the same. I was in a state of complete indecision. I felt I might miss the bombardment and destruction of Masagan; but on the other hand, if I went I might be absent from a big fight near Casa Blanca, for there had been rumours of a concentration of Arabs near the town for several days. At length, after a restless night, I decided to remain where I was, for I did not consider it likely that any French warship would dare bombard the town after what had happened to Casa Blanca. "Well," said my friend, "although they may not bombard, the Arabs will most assuredly attack the town, and the French will have to land and protect it." This was true, and I said I would go off with him in the boat and make a final decision when I got on board. We went out in a horrid sea and boarded one of the Forward Lines. The captain received us most hospitably, and supplied us with whiskies-and-sodas, with real ice in them—luxuries not to be found at Casa Blanca. On board I met Mr Spinney, the British Consul at Masagan, who most strongly advised me to come down the coast, as he was sure there would be trouble. This still further unsettled me, and Casa Blanca looked so peaceful that I was almost tempted to go. Spinney promised to put me up, to supply me with all the clothes I needed, and to make me his guest during my stay. At length I decided to toss up whether I would go or remain, for,

as far as I could judge, the chances were about equal of something happening at either place. I tossed, and the lot turned in favour of Casa Blanca. I just had time to jump into a boat and was rowed ashore. That very afternoon the Arabs attacked the town, and three days later we had our biggest fight against them. Masagan remained as peaceful as any Methodist community on Good Friday. On that occasion I was fortunate; but during my visit to Rabat I was a victim of a good trick on the part of the Arabs, which I will relate. Rabat was at this time the centre of interest, on account of the arrival of Abdul Aziz from Fez; and it was the object of the English and many French correspondents to obtain the first interview with the unfortunate Sultan who was destined so shortly to lose his throne. After my arrival at Rabat I found that two of my English colleagues had succeeded in seeing Abdul Aziz before myself, because they had been there longer, and had been able to make their arrangements before me. This was annoying; for when my summons came it was three days after the others had seen him, and therefore the interview would possess but little interest or novelty. However, I was helped by one circumstance. The weather had been so bad that the bar had been closed for three days, and consequently it had been impossible to send out the mails in the wooden barges to the French cruiser *Guedon*, whence they were daily transferred to a torpedo-boat and taken to Tangier, which was the first station from which cables

could be despatched to Europe. Thus, owing to the surf breaking over the bar, all mails had been held up for three days, and there was a chance of being level with, and even of getting ahead of, my rivals. My interview with Abdul Aziz was fixed for 2 P.M. That morning the sea was very rough, and the bar remained impassable; and on making inquiries of the port-captain, a swarthy old Moor, I was informed there was not the smallest chance of any barge being able to go out that day. M. Regnault, he informed us, had most important despatches; but these could not be sent, although the French authorities had urged the Arabs to make the attempt. The Moorish boatmen refused. I thought I would try the effect of a bribe. The barges are paid for by the Moorish Government, and had been put at the disposal of the French authorities during their stay at Rabat. I offered ten dollars to the harbour-master if he would take me out that afternoon. He cast a longing look at the long line of breaking foam, and shook his head. I raised my price to fifteen dollars, and I thought I noticed that the surf was subsiding a little in his imagination. But again he refused; and I raised my price to twenty dollars, only to suffer further disappointment. I used every persuasive argument I could think of, but even at twenty-five dollars he was adamant. At length, at thirty, he said he would try and take me out, provided the sea got no worse in the meanwhile, and we made the following bargain. Immediately after I had seen the Sultan, I would hasten to the quay and



there embark with just one bag, leaving the remainder of my luggage to be brought on to Tangier by Aron Bensimhon as soon as a ship reached the port. I agreed to pay over the money on my safe arrival on the cruiser *Guedon*. The harbour-master, for his part, undertook to take me out through the surf, and to carry no mails or any other passengers; for if he carried the mails the whole object of my perilous expedition would be lost, as any one could send off letters and cables with the news. He swore by Allah to abide by these conditions; but I did not trust him, and told Aron to watch the boat and see that nothing was placed in it.

Meanwhile I hurried off and saw the Sultan. My interview lasted for two hours, and immediately after it was over I dashed down to the port to catch my boat. I found all in readiness, the boat's crew in their places, the captain on board, and no other passenger or mails in sight. I said to Aron, "Have you watched the boat ever since I left?" He replied, "Yes." "Are you quite sure," I said, "that no mail-bags have been put on board?" "No, there are none, for I have never left the spot." I jumped on board and he cast off. I was not in a most suitable attire for surf-bathing, as I had put on the most respectable suit I owned in Morocco in honour of the Sultan. When it became known that a boat was going to try and cross the bar, a large crowd assembled at the port side and on the cliffs overlooking the sea, expecting, and no doubt hoping, it would end in disaster. My faithful Aron told me subsequently

that he had fully made up his mind he would never see me again, and that he had already begun to think about what articles of my kit he should secure as souvenirs. We soon left the smooth water of the inner harbour and entered the surf made by the breakers after they had swept over the bar. I must confess that as we approached the bar itself, I was appalled at the huge mountains of water which came rushing in, and I would have given a great deal to have gone back, had it been feasible; but once we had entered the surf it was impossible to turn the barge round, and our only chance of safety lay in keeping her head to the waves. The barge was very big and strong, and, in addition to the captain, was manned by a crew of twenty odd men. Every time a great wave came rolling in the crew sang out prayers to Allah in perfect unconcern, and when it passed and left us in the trough, uttered sighs of relief. Curious to relate, I soon found myself singing in unison with them. When we reached the bar I thought we were in for a disaster, for our barge stood almost upright, and then tossed its bows into the trough, only to be taken up a second later by another and a bigger wave which threw the rowers off their seats. So alarming was our position that I took off my clothes and prepared to swim. Our captain steered us as close as possible to a spit of sand running out from Sali, so that, in the event of our being overturned, we would stand some chance of reaching the shore. But at length, by splendid seamanship and hard rowing, we passed the worst part of the broken

water, and made tracks for the French cruiser *Guedon*, singing loud praises to Allah. I was received on board with great enthusiasm by the officers and crew, who had watched our passage over the bar with great anxiety. As I was stepping on to the battleship the captain of the barge asked for his thirty dollars, and I parted with the money, feeling that he had earned it well, for now I would be able to get my despatches off before anybody else. My dismay was great when a moment later I saw a mail-bag being hoisted out of the boat on to the battleship. I cursed the bargee, and told him he must give me back my money as he had broken his contract, as once the mails were on board all my energies and risks counted for nothing, and the other despatches would reach England by exactly the same date. I demanded my thirty dollars back, but it was no use—the barge had drifted from the battleship, and was already making tracks for the shore with desperate speed, fearing, no doubt, that the boat might be sent in pursuit. I have never yet discovered how they managed to conceal the mails on board, but their reasons for breaking their agreement were obvious. Once I passed the bar safely, M. Regnault would have insisted upon their taking the mails out in another barge, and they did not relish having to go through the ordeal twice. I was received with great kindness and hospitality by the officers of the *Guedon*, and when I explained to them what had happened, and how I had been sold by the port-captain, they were very indignant, and the captain advised me

to make a complaint to M. Regnault, and claim the thirty dollars I had lost, as the boats were already paid for by the Government, and if they brought out the mails they had no right to charge me for the journey. But I did not consider it worth my while to do so. We then adjourned to the gun-room, had an excellent dinner, and passed a very pleasant evening with the officers, who were a charming lot of men. We sat up and played bridge until a late hour, and just as I was retiring the conversation turned on my voyage across the bar. They agreed that I had had very bad luck and deserved to get my despatch home first, and in order to facilitate this the officer in charge of the wireless telegraphy said that if I would make a summary of my interview with Abdul Aziz he would transmit it by wireless telegraphy down the coast to the cruiser *Jeanne d'Arc*, which was lying at anchor off Tangier, and from there it would be sent ashore and despatched to England. I accepted this kind offer, wrote out a summary of it, and went to bed. On the following morning the officer came to me very crestfallen, and apologised for not having sent the cable. He had asked the captain's permission, who upheld he must first of all wire down the coast to Admiral Philibert, who was on the *Gloire* off Casa Blanca, and ask his permission. This was done, and Admiral Philibert cabled back as follows: "Much regret impossible to give permission to send cable. I have no objection myself, but if it became known among the French journalists that I had sent a cable for an English journalist

I should never hear the end of it, and would have to send cables for them too." This was a very sound view to take of the matter, and the Admiral was more than justified in avoiding such a dangerous precedent. That afternoon no torpedo-boat came from Casa Blanca, and I was obliged to wait on board the *Guedon* until the following midday. Meanwhile the sea had become quite calm and the bar subsided, and everybody who wished to leave Rabat was able to come out and catch the same boat as myself to Tangier. Thus all my efforts had been wasted. I had spent thirty dollars, had taken considerable risk, and had a good suit of clothes ruined by the spray, merely to serve as a messenger to carry the mail-bags containing the letters and telegrams of my rivals. Nevertheless the life of a correspondent is full of incidents such as these. The disappointments must be taken with the successes, and I was well recompensed by the kind reception I received on board the *Guedon*, and the more than pleasant evening I spent with her captain and officers.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## PROGRESS OF EVENTS—WINTER OF 1907 AND 1908.

ON leaving Rabat I returned to England and remained for the next seven months out of Morocco, but as I desire to make the story of events in that country continuous, it is necessary for me to relate and to explain briefly what took place during the winter of 1907 and 1908. For a short time the tribes in the Chaouia remained quiet, and no further attacks were made on the French, but late in October a young Frenchman who was riding outside the French outposts was murdered, and this led to an outbreak of hostilities. The French army was steadily reinforced, and General Drude was superseded by General D'Amade. In the spring of 1908 the latter commenced a regular campaign against the Chaouia tribes to punish the guilty and to bring them to complete submission. This campaign was well conducted, and although the Moors offered considerable resistance, it met with entire success, and in a little over two months D'Amade was master of the whole of the Chaouia. Meanwhile the rumours which reached Europe concerning

Moulai el Hafid were various. At one time he was reported to be making progress; at another it was announced that his followers had deserted him. For nearly six months Hafid was lost between Marrackesh and Fez, and no one was certain of his movements or of his prospects. Nevertheless the mass of the Moors had proclaimed him as Sultan, and only the coast towns continued their allegiance to Abdul Aziz—not from any inborn loyalty, but because they were overawed by the presence of the French army in the Chaouia, by the ships anchored off their ports, and by the newly-organised force of Franco-Spanish police. Meanwhile Abdul Aziz remained quietly at Rabat negotiating with the French. He made no attempt to move beyond his palace grounds, and he was deserted by all save his few personal attendants. In spite of his misfortunes Monsieur Regnault continued to treat with him as if he were the sovereign of the country in possession of full powers, and who had the influence and authority to control the unruly elements within his empire. Active preparations were already in progress for organising a great *mahalla* which was to march on Marrackesh and seize the southern capital, whilst Moulai el Hafid was fully occupied in holding his own in the north. The pertinacity with which the French stuck to the belief that it only needed a show of power on the part of Abdul Aziz to get rid of his rival is remarkable, as showing how hopelessly they misjudged the situation. M. Regnault of all men should have been well informed as to the true

state of Moorish public opinion, but he seems to have been deceived into the belief that no movement in Morocco could have any real united public opinion behind it, and therefore he considered it was better to stand by the Sultan who had reigned for fourteen years, and who had signed the Act of Algeciras, rather than to hitch France's political waggon to an upstart who was still an unknown quantity. For years France had been endeavouring to acquire a leading influence at the Court of Abdul Aziz, but always found her representatives secondary in importance to the little group of Englishmen around the throne. It was only when Abdul Aziz left Fez and actually arrived at Rabat that France saw the opportunity of acquiring that influence and of exercising that authority over the young Sultan which she felt she was entitled to by reason of her geographical position in relation to, and her special interests in, Morocco. For the first time for many years Abdul Aziz was separated from his little English coterie. His right-hand man, Sir Harry Maclean, was at this time on a prolonged visit to Raisuli. Dr Verdon was away in England, and the others had dispersed. Poor Abdul Aziz was without money and almost without friends, and his few remaining followers were daily deserting him. Therefore the friendship and support of the French at this juncture appealed strongly to him. The presence of the French army in the Chaouia alone enabled him to hold Rabat, and her warships anchored off the coast provided him with a ready means of escape in case of



need. The young Sultan was thus willing to sign any treaties or conditions, however humiliating to his country, which were asked of him. French diplomacy might have scored decisively over its rivals if only there had been some life left in the cause of Abdul Aziz to turn to good account. But the Sultan's prospects were hopeless. French statesmen could not grasp that the people of Morocco were in deadly earnest in getting rid of a man whom they despised, and in selecting another whom they regarded as the champion of a great national issue. The French argued thus: "Morocco is the land sacred to rebellion and disorder. There is always a pretender springing up somewhere to throw off his allegiance to the Sultan, but these outbreaks are generally local, and a force hastily collected at Fez is usually competent to cope with them." They did not realise that for the first time for many years Morocco was in the throes of a dynastic struggle fraught with momentous consequences not only to Morocco itself but to the peace of Europe. The issues at stake were perfectly clear to those who were well acquainted with the country, and who did not allow themselves to be deceived by the mass of false reports which found its way to Europe. The true issue was a last dying struggle for Home Rule. It was the revolt of the Nationalist party against the rule of a monarch whom the people considered had sold his country to the foreigner. This was the issue which gave life to Moulai el Hafid's cause, and which brought him adherents from all parts

of the country. When he first raised his standard at Morocco city in August 1907, it was regarded as a forlorn-hope by the majority of those who professed to be acquainted with Moroccan politics, and as likely to follow the course of so many other similar outbreaks which have occurred of recent years. These prophets were entirely wrong. In less than a year Moulai el Hafid marched from the southern capital, Marrackesh, and captured Fez—his rival's stronghold,—where he was immediately proclaimed by the *Oudama* or College of Lawyers, the sole authority competent to pronounce on questions of legitimacy. Surely, then, there must have been some good reason why the cause of Moulai el Hafid succeeded where so many others had failed. The reason was clear to many, but not to the French. For the first time a pretender had come forward representing a national policy which appealed strongly to all Moors, and at once lifted his cause above those purely local considerations on which the affairs of Morocco usually turn. All the petty rebels at once disappeared from the field, leaving the arena clear for the jousts of Moulai el Hafid and his half-brother, Abdul Aziz, or else they ranged themselves under the banners of the rivals and fought in line with one of them. In the face of these self-evident facts the French still continued to make preparations to enable Abdul Aziz to march on Marrackesh. From the very first Moulai el Hafid approached the French in a friendly spirit, endeavouring to come to terms with them, and to prove that he was in no sense hostile to France or to foreigners gener-

ally. Within a month of his setting up his standard at Marrackesh the Glaui, acting as his Grand Vizier, wrote a letter to the French Government, in which he set forth fully his position, explained the motives for his rebellion, pointed out how much harm had been done by his brother's misrule, and ended by begging France to remain absolutely neutral, in which case Hafid's followers would not attack the French army or enter the Chaouia. This letter, couched in the most dignified language, was totally ignored and its contents suppressed. The French press began a campaign of calumny and slander against Moulai el Hafid, his character and conduct, which was as groundless as it was stupid. They accused him of deliberately inciting the Chaouia tribes to attack their armies, and of also stirring up the tribes on the Algerian frontier. Certain evidence exists that Hafid left no stone unturned to stop the fighting in the Chaouia, which he knew would be fatal to his prospects. This made him lose many followers, who urged him on to declare a *jehad* or Holy War throughout Morocco, and to drive the French army into the sea,—a line of action which would have ensured his popularity. But Hafid listened to none of these counsels. He never lost sight of the fact that no Sultan can hope to reign for long in Morocco without the co-operation and support of Europe, and therefore he was careful to avoid any action which might stand in the way of his eventual recognition. He pursued his journey to Fez, winning over the tribes, and often suffering great dangers and

hardships, until he reached the capital in June 1908, where he made terms with the inhabitants, and was acknowledged by them as Sultan. Meanwhile the presence of two Sultans in the field had reduced Morocco to a painful state of anarchy. The tribesmen were everywhere in open rebellion. Trade with the interior was almost at a standstill. The lives and property of Europeans were in jeopardy. It was evident to all that such a state of affairs could not last for long. One of the rivals would have to succumb to the contest. I felt certain, after seeing Abdul Aziz at Rabat, that his cause was hopelessly lost, and that only an advance of the French army on Fez could restore the Sultan to his throne. I was therefore very much surprised at the manner in which the French continued to support Abdul Aziz, and it was with a view of finding out the true state of affairs in Morocco that I left England in June 1908 with the intention of making my way to Fez, there to join Moulai el Hafid, who was reported to be rapidly approaching the capital.

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## CHAPTER XV.

## PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY.

ON my arrival at Tangier I inquired if it was possible to make the journey to Fez, but met with very little encouragement in official quarters; and the Legation informed me that any one attempting to go would be stopped. No European had ventured on the road since the general exodus in July of the previous year, and the reports, so carefully circulated by the French and Azizist agents, that Moulai el Hafid was a bloodthirsty savage, who hated the sight of foreigners, seemed to render the undertaking one of great difficulty and danger. However, from my private advices, I had reason to believe that the presence of Europeans would be far from unwelcome to Hafid, and I decided to slip quietly up country unobserved. I speedily realised that it would be impossible to start from Tangier, as Moorish authorities had strict orders to allow no European to pass the town gates. I was advised to go to the little port of Larache, forty-eight miles down the coast. My first step was to find some one to go with me who could speak the language. My former interpreter, who had served me so well at Casa Blanca, Aron Bensimhon, wished to come,

but yielded to the importunate clamours of his family, who feared for his safety, as reports had reached Tangier that the Jews of Fez had been badly treated and went in danger of their lives. In the end I was obliged to accept the services of a guide called the "Rabbit," on account of the peculiar shape of his ears and nose, which gave him a very general resemblance to that harmless animal. Rabbit is the most famous guide in Tangier. His character is peculiar, and his society is much sought after by tourists and diplomats. His knowledge of the English language is confined to those words which public decency prohibits from appearing in the dictionary. But it is surprising how perfectly a man can make his meaning clear and comprehensible by merely using the unorthodox expletives of a language. Every master under whom he serves adds a few expressive phrases to his rapidly swelling vocabulary. They cannot help doing so, however modest their demeanour and gentle their upbringing, for Rabbit in his off-moments would try the patience of Job. On landing at Tangier he greets you with insolent familiarity. A raucous voice shouts out from the crowd on the quay, "How are you, old pal?" or, "How are you, old fellow?" or, "What have you come here for?" "Want a guide? Colonel Pleydell and the American Minister are my friends." He then proceeds to rattle off the names of his distinguished acquaintances in Tangier and Gibraltar, telling you the peculiarities of their habits and lives, and dividing them into two classes,

those whom he calls "Good man" and those whom he calls "No good man." He will also tell you that he has many friends amongst the officers in garrison at Gibraltar, and that in a day or two he is off to stay with them at their barracks. Rabbit, in spite of his faults, has a good heart, and when sober is most obliging, if not very hard-working, but the curse of his life is his delight in going on the spree. During these lighter moments he gets hopelessly drunk, has a fight, and usually wakes up on the following morning in the noisome atmosphere of the local Moorish jail. Now you may stay in a Moorish jail indefinitely unless you can pay a sum to the keeper to release you. But Rabbit is never lacking in friends. He is so intimately acquainted with the private lives of the leaders of society in Tangier, and he has so many difficult and delicate missions thrust on him (for he is absolutely reliable), that he is always in a position to call upon some client to pay up the necessary, and to release him from durance vile. Thus he has become part and parcel of the life of Tangier, and he is the most familiar figure on board the boats which ply between that town and Gibraltar; and in the little *soko*, where he may be found any afternoon sipping his coffee or drinking the vilest whisky neat—for he despises mixing it with water, declaring, like the Scotsman, that it ruins two good things. Rabbit was pleased at the prospect of going to Fez, prophesying that Moulai el Hafid would be delighted to see him, and assuring me that, under his auspices, I would be certain of a good reception.

On June 30, at 11 P.M., Rabbit and myself slipped out of Tangier and boarded the little steamer, *Gibel Musa*, without telling any one of our intentions or of our eventual destination. Before leaving Tangier I bought a revolver which had formerly belonged to the chief constable of Cadiz, who had been obliged to sell it after a spree at Tangier, the conclusion of which found him with his ready money exhausted. I also bought fifty cartridges; and this weapon, carefully loaded, never left my side during my stay in Morocco. I only had to draw it on two occasions, and never to use it. On my return from Fez, three months later, I tried it on the sea between Larache and Tangier. Six times on pulling the trigger there followed the click of a hammer without any report. Four more cartridges were tried without result, and only the eleventh went off. Never put your trust in a second-hand foreign-made weapon!

We arrived off the little port of Larache at 6 A.M. the following morning, but were unable to cross the bar until two hours later, and during that period we enjoyed to the full the sickening oily roll of the Atlantic. But at 8 A.M. we were across the bar and safely anchored in the shelter of the river. A barge took us ashore, and Rabbit installed me at the only hotel in the town—kept, as is customary in Morocco, by a Spaniard. The rooms were like so many horse-boxes, and as the partitions only go half-way up the wall, you can listen to all the secrets of your neighbour's life. The walls were covered with old numbers of 'The Graphic' and 'Black and White,' and you could



follow pictorially the Dreyfus Case and the South African War. Larache is a dull spot, with nothing of interest to see or to do, and I wished to leave on the following day, but we could not get horses to ride or mules for the baggage in time. We tried to find a muleteer who would take us to Fez, but all refused to go farther than Alcazar on account of the hostilities between the followers of Moulai el Hafid and those of Abdul Aziz.

Alcazar, twenty odd miles inland, was to be our first stopping - place, and it had recently declared for Moulai el Hafid; whilst Larache, being a coast town and near the big warships, and consequently fearing a bombardment, still maintained its loyalty to Abdul Aziz. Thus one had to cross from the camp of one party into that of the other, and this is usually a dangerous undertaking when civilised communities are engaged in warfare, but in Morocco the rules are very different, as the sequel will show. Rabbit came to me later in the day with the news that I must discard all my European clothes and accoutrements and travel as a Moor, as it would be quite impossible to make the journey to Fez as a European. A local tailor came to measure me, and I was soon in possession of a complete outfit. Moorish garments are not very easy to handle when you first put them on, but in the heat of the summer they are infinitely cooler than European, as you always have a breeze between the inner vest and your skin, for there is nothing close or tight - fitting to



*The Port of Larache.*



prevent it. Our next step was to obtain a suitable horse, which is just as difficult a process in Morocco as it is elsewhere in the world. However, on this occasion I was singularly fortunate, and bought a fine four-year-old Barb stallion from an Arab who had owned him from his foaling, and who shed bitter tears at the parting, although he took 100 dollars Hassani in exchange. We hired a muleteer and three mules to carry our scanty belongings to Alcazar, for by this time all my carefully selected camp-equipment had been whittled down to a few necessary articles which could be hidden away in Moorish trunks. Rabbit said we would ride from Larache to Alcazar in our own clothes, as that would not attract attention, and as it was only necessary to change after we started from Alcazar for Fez.

Although Larache was then faithful to Abdul Aziz, and Alcazar had declared for Moulai el Hafid, I soon found that no savage internecine warfare raged between the two towns. No hostile line of outposts challenged the intruder, and no cavalry patrols made sudden dashes into the heart of the enemy's country to glean information of his movements or to destroy his supplies. Perfect peace reigned between the inhabitants of the two towns; trade was being carried on as usual, and unless you knew it as a fact, decided and indisputable, it would have been impossible to tell that a great dynastic struggle was agitating the land. Enlightened Morocco does not believe in more bloodshed than is absolutely necessary, prefers powder-play and much talk,

and consequently Moulai el Hafid marched from Marrackesh to Fez almost without firing a shot,—a fact which showed the strength of his cause.

We passed through a splendid stretch of country between Larache and Alcazar, one of the most fertile in all Morocco,—a great grass plain bounded by the river Lekous, on which anything will grow, and which supplies pasture for thousands of cattle. We halted for breakfast under some trees, and met several mounted Arabs and caravans of laden mules or camels going towards Larache. They questioned Rabbit eagerly as to who I was and where I was bound for. Rabbit told me that one man said to him, “I had the intention of killing your friend sitting there under the tree, as I thought he was a Frenchman, but now you tell me he is English I wish him a good journey, only I warn you to be careful with those whom you meet on the road, because we are determined to kill all the French, for they have destroyed our towns, burnt our villages, and want to seize our country.” We took this friendly advice, and henceforth were always careful to state our nationality. In a little over five hours we rode into Alcazar, which deserves its title of the beautiful. The country round the town is magnificent. There are mountains, rivers, fertile valleys, orange-groves, wide grassy plains, and the finest of corn lands. Alcazar is famous as the home of the British Consular Agent “Bibi Carleton.” Bibi is a wonderful man, and probably no single individual in Morocco has ever acquired the same influence

over the Moors, or knows so much of their character and habit of thought. He was born and bred in the country, and has lived there all his life. He knows all the great Caids, brigands, and aspiring Sultans. He has always treated them generously and fairly, and in return they implicitly trust him. He has business relations with the tribes round Alcazar who look after his sheep, and he, in return, finds a market for the wool. He has set up a mill in Alcazar, and makes quite a handsome profit by grinding the corn which is brought in from the villages; and I believe I am right in saying that Bibi's is the only steam mill in the whole of Morocco. He has a charming house and garden at Alcazar, and here he is only too willing to entertain any travellers who may be passing through. We sought him out on our arrival, and I was introduced to him by Rabbit. He took us to his garden, and made us comfortable in his house for the night, and introduced me to his brother Harry Carleton. Harry also knows Morocco well, having lived there for fifteen years. I told them I wanted to go to Fez. Bibi at first raised many objections, and said it would be too difficult and dangerous, but after some discussion he agreed to help me. He said it would be impossible for me to go alone with Rabbit as he did not understand enough English, and as I spoke no Arabic we would be sure to land ourselves in trouble. He then suggested that his brother Harry should go with me, as he spoke the language exceedingly well and knew the road and the people. To

this I agreed, and from thenceforth Harry Carleton became my inseparable companion. We had great difficulty in finding a muleteer who would carry our baggage to Fez, for the Caid of Alcazar, a great fanatic, declared that any one who helped a European to go to Fez would immediately be cast into prison and receive a thousand lashes. Naturally no one was very keen to take the risk. However, Bibi rules Alcazar and its surroundings with an authority never equalled by any Caid or Sultan, and after a short discussion he induced a swarthy son of Ham to take the proffered reward and the threatened risk. But the muleteer said he would take us only thirty miles on the road to a village called Shamaka, kept by a friendly Caid called Absalam, who had been a great cattle-stealer and thief in his days, but who had now settled down to a more peaceful existence. Before leaving Alcazar I had to discard still more of my precious kit, and even to give up my English saddle and purchase a Moorish one, with its high peak in front and behind and reposing on ten parti-coloured blankets. I retained only a camp-bed, hidden away in a Moorish trunk, a few camp-and kitchen-utensils, and some preserved food. Harry Carleton dressed as a mountaineer and looked the part exactly, being burnt to the right colour. I dressed as a respectable town Moor, but must confess I bore little if any resemblance to one, and in consequence I attracted more attention on the road than I would have done had I travelled in my ordinary clothes, for then

there could have been no doubt as to who I was, whereas, being a cross betwixt Christian and Mahomedan, every one wanted to know from what part of the world I had originally come. Harry Carleton also, much to my joy, added a Martini rifle to our outfit.

The evening before I left Alcazar I witnessed a unique exhibition of snake-charming, and one which I never wish to see again. I was standing with Bibi Carleton and his brother Harry outside their house when a fanatic came up, wildly gesticulating, calling down curses upon us, and holding in his hand a large, live, and poisonous snake. His hair was dressed in ringlets, after the fashion of the early Victorian ladies, and his whole appearance was ferocious and disgusting. He was followed by a crowd of people who pressed round him, and wishing to clear the space, he took the snake by the tail and swung it round at arm's-length, quickly dispersing the spectators. The holy man then became pacified, curled the snake round his neck, and even allowed it to crawl partly down his back. Bibi Carleton said to me, "This man is a frequent visitor here; he is a fanatic, and we must humour him by giving him money." (Thus even does fanaticism yield to the power of money.) I handed over some silver, and most of the spectators did likewise. But this philanthropy, instead of calming the man, made him wilder than ever. He seized the snake by the tail, uttered fearful cries, and rushed at the spectators. In a trice the street was cleared. Then he came in my direction, but



having an intense horror of snakes, and not wishing to cause trouble by threatening to shoot him, I fled inside the house and watched the proceedings from this vantage-point. What followed disgusted me. This devoted child of the Prophet placed the head of the snake between his teeth, held the tail in his hands, and, exerting all his strength, stretched it out beyond its full length until it broke off at the neck, leaving the head in his mouth. Then having swallowed the head, he walked down the street, at intervals biting bits off the still wriggling body.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## ON THE ROAD TO FEZ.

CARLETON and myself, with three pack-mules, left Alcazar at 7 A.M. on the morning of June 27, our destination being Shamaka. We had not been long on the road before I made the discovery that June is not the most pleasant month for travelling in Northern Africa, and that I had a very hot time to look forward to in July and August. The sun beats down with oppressive force, steadily gaining in power until two o'clock; then gradually sinks away until sunset, when the air becomes cool, and even a little chilly. We passed through the hills which surround Alcazar and entered a broad plain, which took two hours to cross. The country seemed both rich and prosperous, and was given up to cattle-grazing and to the cultivation of corn, oats, and barley. But you miss the trees; for on the road to Fez there are no forests or woods, and you are lucky to find an occasional tree or the shelter of some orange-grove to take the midday rest under.

Mile after mile the road runs over the same grassy prairie land or over moorland covered with

heather, and varied by short stretches through the hills. You disturb many a covey of partridges; and there are plover, ducks, snipe, and vast quantities of pigeons in the neighbourhood of the villages. The country is a beautiful green in the spring, but in the summer it is burnt to an arid brown. Water, even in the summer, is plentiful, for the wells were full and the rivers contained a fair quantity. The water in the wells is, however, so muddy that it is almost unfit to drink, even when boiled, and unfortunately I had no filter with me. But in the great heat one did not care what one took as long as it was wet. We kept steadily on, doing between four and five miles an hour. The villagers in the neighbourhood of Alcazar took but little notice of us, being accustomed to Europeans, but farther on the road we aroused much interest and curiosity. Rabbit, the guide, had a ready answer to all their inquiries. He told one lot that we were a party of Egyptians who had just made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and were now on our way to pay our respects and do homage to Moulai el Hafid. If the passers-by found out we were Europeans, and were not satisfied with Rabbit's explanation, that worthy told them we were the English and German Ministers on our way to acknowledge Hafid as Sultan of Morocco, and to arrange with him some combined plan for driving out the French. This, of course, brought us into instant favour, and we were wished the best of luck in our enterprise.

When nearing our camping-place we met three soldiers who had come from Fez, bearing letters

from Hafid to the Caid of Alcazar and also to Bibi Carleton. They were very surprised to meet us, but were most friendly when we told them we were on our way to visit their master. They told us many stories of Hafid's journey from Marrackesh to Fez, for all three had accompanied him from the commencement. We told them we were going to stop the night at Shamaka, and they begged us to wait a day there as the roads were unsafe, and they would act as our escort for the remainder of the journey. We consented to this arrangement; and the oldest of the three, who was worn out by the journey, remained with us, really, I believe, to act as a spy. We gave his companions backsheesh, and parted the best of friends.

At 4 P.M. we left the track, crawled up a high hill, and found ourselves in Shamaka, the home of the Bibi's friend, Caid Absalam. He had not been advised of our arrival, but directly he heard whence we had come, and found out that Harry was Bibi's brother, he was friendship and hospitality itself. Caid Absalam is a curious type of gentleman, whom one only finds at large in Morocco, where his peculiar talents can be turned to great advantage. In a more civilised community he would spend his days as the guest of the State or asleep in lime under the flags of the prison courtyard.

Bibi Carleton had selected the Caid's village as our first stopping-place, because the latter was under many obligations to him (they are in the sheep and cattle trade together). Bibi acted on the principle that if entrusted to the biggest

scoundrel in the district, you were likely to come to less harm than elsewhere. Absalam has in the course of his eventful career been guilty of all the crimes that go to make the perfect brigand. He has stolen cattle, horses, and sheep; he has waylaid travellers on the road, and carried on continual internecine warfare with the neighbouring villages. Whilst thus honourably employed in supporting himself and his family, he has caused the death of eleven of his fellow-men, and, as he expressed himself on the first occasion on which we met, "he was anxious to bring the number up to a dozen before retiring." Absalam's appearance is hardly prepossessing. He is tall and strongly made; he wears his hair very long, curling it in ringlets, and from each side of his head there project great tufts, which give him a most ferocious aspect. His weakness is a love of smoking *kiff*, and when under its influence he wanders about speaking to no one, and recognising not even his oldest friend. But in Morocco, if you are properly introduced, even to a murderer, the rigid laws of Arab hospitality will ensure your having a good reception. No duchess in her ball-room could have done the honours of Shamaka with greater ease, grace, and dignity than did the wicked Caid and his brother Abacta, thieves and murderers though they are. This seems to prove that many good fellows have been prematurely cut off by the hangman's rope, who, if given another chance, would have made charming friends and useful citizens. Personally, once under Absalam's roof I felt perfectly safe. Having selected a site for

our tent, Absalam proceeded to pitch it with his own hands, requisitioning the children and young men of the village to assist him. When this was done he brought us green tea, sugar, and mint, laid out on a silver-gilt tray. The cups were small and elegant, having figures of the eighteenth-century life in France painted on them. These are made in Austria, for Vienna and Dresden supply most of the china used in Morocco. It is a curious fact that, however poor and barbarous a village may appear from the outside, the Caid or headman is certain to produce a silver-gilt tray, a silver kettle and teapot, and cups and saucers of brilliant design and colouring.

A Moorish village deserves a careful study, for there is such a strange mixture of birds, animals, and human beings living huddled together that it is hard to discover which predominate and have authority—man or the beasts of the field. Shamaka is in the middle of a fine corn-growing country, and the villagers were busy getting in the harvest, which is practically all the work they do in the year—namely, to plough the field and sow in the winter, and to gather the crops of a generous nature in the summer. The soil is so rich that two harvests can be produced, and this enables the mass of the people to live in comparative idleness for the greater part of the year. The wretched huts, made of straw, were pitched at the most unnatural angle on the side of a steep hill, which commanded a fine view of the surrounding country, and thus enabled a good watch to

be kept over the flocks and herds. . The sites of the villages are not permanent, but are usually shifted every two or three years to cleaner ground. During the day the village is given up almost exclusively to the children and to the dogs. The majority of the men, and almost all the women, are kept hard at work in the fields. The headmen do nothing but lie around and smoke, or else indulge in a little fancy powder-play, or ride off to the neighbouring villages to call on their friends. It is the women who do most of the work, and they are assisted by the poorer men, who are hired as labourers. The Moor is allowed by his religion four wives and as many concubines as he can keep. The richer the Moor the more concubines,—for they are his servants, performing not only the household duties, which are comparatively slight, but also a great deal of the hard manual labour. In fact, the husband is supported by the labour of his wives. I speak now of the tribes in the country; but life in the capital and in the towns is very different. At Fez the good families keep negress slaves to perform their household tasks, but in the country the lot of the women is very hard; yet they do not seem to mind, and are usually smiling and happy. They are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water; they cook and they scrub; they guide the plough and reap the harvest. The result on their appearance and physique is naturally deplorable. Many are born with good looks and good figures; but at an early age their hard and

unnatural lives destroy these *printemps* charms, and they become slovenly and prideless,—mere drudges to obey the command of a master whose former affection has long since passed to younger and more handsome rivals. This is one of the greatest evils of polygamy; for man, constantly able to renew, with youthful additions, the companions of his life, has no interest in preserving in comfort and good health the sharers of his early years.

The time to see an Arab camp is at dusk, when men, women, and children, dogs, camels, goats, sheep, cattle, and horses, and hundreds of herons, concentrate under its shelter for food and drink, and to seek protection from robbers and raiders during the night. Such a babel of discordant sounds, could it be reproduced on the phonograph, would constitute the most formidable weapon ever introduced into electoral strife with which to break up the meetings of an adversary. First and foremost in all these musical outbursts is the pack of craven dogs, who challenge the approach of every stranger or stray animal entering the camp after dark. The pack sets the time to the others; the donkeys start braying, the horses neigh, the sheep and cattle join in; the camels add their pathetic note—surely the most pathetic sound ever uttered by man or beast,—and high above all is a noise which so strikingly resembles that of a motor-bicycle at full speed, that unless you know whence the sound emanates, you rush from your tent to welcome this emblem of civilisation and



progress. But you search the horizon in vain. Instead of motor-bicycles, which are responsible for the infernal "pip-pip" that causes so much misery and dust in our English lanes, you are greeted by the fluttering wings of the heron. The animals have the free run of the tents or huts, and it is just as common to see a sheep, a donkey, or a dog coming in or out of the door as a human being. But in spite of the dirt and squalor, it would be hard to find a more picturesque sight than a Moorish camp.

The Moors keep very late hours, for they like to sleep during the heat of the day and to revel during the night. This habit of feasting during the night is somewhat trying to the weary traveller who wants to rest after a long day's march, and to be off again before daybreak. It was after 8 P.M. when Caid Absalam brought before us a fine sheep which he wished to sacrifice in our honour. It is customary to kill the sheep in the presence of those to whom it is presented; but in deference to our feelings on the subject, Absalam had it taken to the rear of the camp and there despatched. Then came a very long wait whilst the sheep was being cooked. We were joined by the leading Moors of the village, and sat round in a circle in the cool night air, under the pale light of a full moon, and drank cup after cup of sweet tea flavoured with mint. We told stories and discussed the political situation of Morocco. It was easy to see how Moulai el Hafid's advance on Fez was agitating the countryside, and all the chiefs,

Caids, and headmen were wondering if he would confirm their appointment, or if they would be cast out and others placed in their stead. Absalam and his brother were contemplating making a journey to Fez to pay their respects to Moulai el Hafid, and to confirm their appointment by paying over a bribe to the new Sultan. It was past eleven o'clock when the liver of the sheep appeared, beautifully cooked on skewers; it was long after midnight, and I was already sound asleep, when the national dish of Morocco — *coscous* — was brought in solemn state from Absalam's hut. *Coscous* is a kind of debased *pilaf*, and is made of corn, with lumps of meat placed on the top of it. The Moors and our servants kept up their feasting and revelry until nearly daybreak. We remained in camp on the following day to await the return of the two soldiers from Alcazar. This delay was far from agreeable. The sun was abnormally hot, and there was not a leaf within miles to which one might fly for shade. It is impossible to sleep or to rest under the circumstances, and you lie in your tent cursing the sun and eagerly counting the seconds until it sinks below the western horizon. We had promised the soldiers to wait for them until 1 P.M. the following day; but on account of the heat we changed our minds and decided to move off at dawn and allow them to overtake us on the road. It is a difficult task to get your caravan packed and started at the appointed hour. Your Moorish servants have no idea of time or punctuality, and dislike early

rising. Therefore you must call yourself, kick the lot of them from under their blankets, and keep doing so until your tents are struck and your mules packed, for if you take your eye off them for a moment they fall asleep again. You are well rewarded by an early start, for you can ride four or five hours until nine o'clock, and these are the coolest and most pleasant hours of the day. Then between nine and ten you choose a suitable spot, pitch your tent, and have lunch. We had only been on the road a short time when we heard, much to our surprise, that another European was ahead of us. We eventually overtook him, and found he was Dr Bellinger, the Spanish physician, who had formerly been up in Fez with Abdul Aziz. He had come from Larache, starting two days after I had left, but had overtaken us because he had not stopped at Alcazar. We quickly made friends and joined forces, and made the rest of the journey together. Dr Bellinger had an excellent cook, which added greatly to our comfort, and for the remainder of the journey we lived extremely well. That night we camped at the Warga river, at a large village bearing the same name. Here the people were not so friendly; but the Caid, who knew Carleton, made us very welcome, and offered the customary gift of a sheep, chickens, eggs, sugar, and tea. We had only been in camp a short time when the villagers informed us that another European was approaching, and what was our surprise to have Bibi Carleton ride up, accompanied by the two soldiers whom we had met on the road. He





*Crossing the Waga at Dawn.*

told us he had received a letter from Moulai el Hafid, urging him to come to Fez immediately, as he wished to consult him on many important matters. The Warga river is a fine broad stream, and even at this season of the year was fairly full. We all went and had a delightful bathe, which was badly needed after the heat and fatigue of the day's march. When the news spread through the surrounding country that the great Bibi Carleton was in Warga, the Caids and headmen flocked from the neighbouring villages to pay their respects to him, and to have, what the Moors love more than anything else, a long palaver. That evening we had a great reunion in Bibi's tent. Rabat carpets were placed on the ground, and mattresses and pillows ranged round in a circle. On these we reclined, and had cup after cup of tea served to us. The Arabs are great story-tellers, and I heard many interesting tales of the events of the past two years that evening. Some were sad, some were tragic, and others comic,—for in Morocco, however tragic the circumstances, there is usually a comic element that saves the situation. The Caid of Warga had lately been killed in a skirmish with a neighbouring tribe, and his two sons were anxious to secure the position made vacant by the death of their father. One of the brothers went to Fez to obtain the appointment from Moulai el Hafid, taking with him a sum of \$20,000 as a present. He paid over the money and \$10,000 more, only to hear a few days later that Hafid had given the appointment to a

higher bidder. This is only one instance of many of a similar kind, and serves to show the uncertainties and vicissitudes of life in Morocco during the change of Sultans. In addition to having lost their inheritance, both brothers have had to leave the district to escape from the jealous wrath of the new Caid, which would be most assuredly visited on them did they remain.

On the following morning we were off at five o'clock, and had a very trying day's march. We went for seven hours without a halt, crossing the Sebou river, and then camped for lunch. The heat was so great that both men and animals were almost overcome by it, and no sooner did we stop than we all fell asleep. We were obliged to leave the main road to Fez on account of the reported hostility of the tribesmen, and take the short cut running through the hills. After a rest of two hours we pressed on again, passing through some very barren and waterless country, marching for another five hours over hilly ground before we reached our destination, a village called Hamuda, perched high up amongst the hills, and only six hours from Fez. Our animals were so exhausted that they could only just crawl into camp, and we ourselves were in little better condition, especially the unfortunate Harry Carleton, who had made the journey with bare legs, with the result that every bit of skin had been burnt off them by the sun. He suffered greatly, but there was no remedy except to wrap bandages soaked in cold water round them. On the road we overtook an



*The Arrival in Camp.*





old Moor, mounted on a very broken-down white horse, and carrying a single-barrel shot-gun, in lieu of a better weapon. He eyed me with interest and addressed me in Arabic, asking me if I remembered him. I replied that I did not, whereupon the old fellow said, "Don't you remember a soldier who admitted you into the presence of Abdul Aziz at Rabat in October last year? I was that soldier, but I have now left my master, whose fortunes are dark, and I am on my way to offer my services to Moulai el Hafid before it is too late." The old time-server was in no way ashamed of his action—in fact, he rather gloried in it; but the incident is typical of the state of feeling in Morocco during the past two years. On the following morning we again made an early start to cover the last lap of our journey. The road was very bad, running up hill and down dale, and at the crest of each incline the muleteer promised that we should see the city, but we were continually disappointed. At last, after six hours' ride, we emerged from a small wood, and there below us lay Fez, its green roofs and minarets and white houses sparkling in the sunshine. It was a cheerful sight after our long and wearisome journey, the pleasure of which had been entirely spoilt by the great heat. Round the town were masses of white tents, where the soldiers of the *mahallas* were camped, and the plain was dotted with mounted men in their picturesque white robes, riding to and from the town, or indulging in a little friendly racing or powder-play. It was a curious sensation which we experienced as we

rode towards the city. I had heard so much of Fez—of its glories, of the culture of its life, and of its architectural splendour—that I could hardly realise I was really about to behold all these things for myself. In addition I had been warned that its inhabitants were the most fanatical of all the Moors, and that it would be absolutely unsafe to enter the town. On the road there had been so much to occupy my mind that I had not thought about the matter; but now, as we rode towards the gate to enter the lion's den, I began to wonder if Moulai el Hafid really would be pleased to see me, or if he and his people would reject our intrusion into their sacred midst. Those whom we passed outside the walls eyed us with much curiosity, and made careful inquiries as to who we were. Near the gates it occurred to us for the first time that we had nowhere to go, so we stopped and had a consultation, and decided to make for the British Post Office, which had been left in charge of a Moorish gentleman, Mr Mikowar, after the flight of the consuls and residents in August 1907. Then we wrapped our *sulhams* and *jellabs* round our heads to hide our faces from the wondering throng, and passed through the gates. We found ourselves at once in a crowded street, swarming with Moors, Jews, and Berbers, busily engaged in buying and selling the commodities of everyday life. They quickly discovered we were Europeans, and we became the centre of a vast amount of curiosity and comment, in which one heard frequent allusions

to *hailouf*, which means "pig," and is the usual manner in which the Arab expresses his hatred and contempt for the infidel. But no one attempted to molest us, and we passed peacefully on our way, down many narrow winding streets, until we arrived at the house of Mr Mikowar.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## OUR RECEPTION AT THE CAPITAL.

MUCH to our surprise, we found that a house had already been prepared against our arrival. Moulai el Hafid had heard of our coming, and had ordered his *houbous*—administrators—to do everything in their power to make us comfortable. Thus my surmises turned out to be correct, and instead of finding a bloodthirsty savage, animated by a hatred of all foreigners, I found Moulai el Hafid to be only too anxious to show that he wished to live on good terms with Europeans.

Every preparation had been made for our arrival, and we found ourselves installed in a roomy house, luxuriously furnished, situated in a street connecting Fez Djedid with Fez Bali. You entered from the road through a large wooden doorway, the exterior of which had been plastered all over with old kerosene tins, a favourite custom in Morocco, and when the sun shone it gave it the appearance of being silver. On one side of the entrance was a large stable, and on the other the garden, in the centre of which was a tank, some four feet deep, which

continually filled itself with fresh water, which was carried to the kitchen. The rooms are built round this garden, and are large and airy. A Moorish house has never more than two storeys, the rooms are abnormally high, and thus a great amount of space is wasted, but this is essential if you wish to keep fairly cool during the heat of the summer. The Moorish home has but little furniture, except an occasional bronze bedstead made in Birmingham, and a few round tables, about six inches high, on which the dishes are placed. For the rest, carpets are laid on the floor, mattresses and cushions placed on the carpets, and on these you recline during the day, and sleep on them during the night. But our house was well equipped with furniture. Moulai el Hafid had ordered Mokwar to supply us with all we wanted, and this gentleman had filled the house with carpets, elegant brass bedsteads, chairs, tables, and cooking utensils. In addition, the Sultan sent a Caid and four soldiers to take up their permanent abode at our residence, and to accompany us whenever we sauntered forth into the streets. Hafid realised he was making a dangerous experiment, for we were the first Europeans to visit him since he had proclaimed himself Sultan the previous year, and it was uncertain how the fanatical population of Fez might regard our presence in the city. Therefore he ordered the Caid and the four soldiers to watch over us to show the people we were under the protection of the Marzhen. But after the first few days I discarded the escort, and roamed about Fez

alone, for the soldiers preferred the unaccustomed luxury and comfort of the house to meandering through the streets, which possessed no charm of originality for them. Thus it was extremely difficult to drag them forth, and if you attempted to go any distance, or to leave the highroad, they always declared it was dangerous, and that their orders forbade them from allowing us to go in that direction. When I add that each of the soldiers expected a dollar a journey in tips, and the Caid two dollars, exercise became altogether too expensive.

On the morning after our arrival I learnt we were to be treated during our stay as the guests of Moulai el Hafid, and were not to be allowed to buy even our own food. Such is the hospitality of this barbaric race! Even a special cook was placed at our disposal. At dawn the imperial administrators knocked at the door, bearing our *mouna* (food) for the ensuing twenty-four hours. The items were: a whole sheep, a dozen chickens, countless loaves of bread, eggs, fresh butter, green tea, coffee, sugar, melons, plums, apples, pears, potatoes, tomatoes, and onions. This supply was continued up to the time of my departure. Naturally it was more than we required for our own use, and the inhabitants in our neighbourhood were not long in discovering this. Henceforth a crowd of soldiers, friendly but impoverished Caid, poor children, and even Jews, attached themselves to our household uninvited, and lived on the Sultan's sumptuous generosity. I made repeated efforts to keep some order amongst this

unruly throng, which grew to such dimensions that at times we could not secure sufficient food for our own use. It was snatched up before our cook had the chance of securing the choicest portions. Therefore every two or three days I was obliged to turn everybody out of doors; but it was of little use, for back they came with renewed vigour.

The day after our arrival we were told that Moulai el Hafid might send to receive us at any moment, and to be prepared for our summons to the palace. Our first step was to acquire raiment suitable for the fashionable life of the capital. The coarse clothes which we had worn on the journey up had to be discarded if we hoped to retain the respect and the prestige of being gentlemen of independent means and of good family—for the Oriental must be impressed to be convinced. This can best be done by a vigorous outward display, and you will be treated according to the show you make, and taken at your own valuation by a race who attach no value to merit of character, and who go through life systematically deceiving all whom they meet, and never speaking the truth except on the rarest and most unimportant occasions.

Our wardrobe was furnished from the Jewish quarter. We had not been settled in Fez twenty-four hours before the news of our arrival had spread through the town, and a swarm of cringing Israelites descended on our house offering to sell us any article we required. Their methods of business differ from those in vogue in Europe. You never



go to a shop in Fez to buy anything—the shop always comes to you; for the presence of a European at the capital is one of those rare events which is seized upon by the Jews with the same avidity as is the visit of some American millionaire to the boulevards of Paris.

The Moors and the Jews have a secret compact to charge the very highest prices to Europeans; and you are obliged to buy far above the market value, because they have pledged their word to one another not to compete for your custom or to sell you an article below a certain price.

The pertinacity of the Jews of Fez commands admiration, even if it is annoying to experience. You may turn them away from your door day after day, declaring that you have no need for the particular article they desire to sell; you may threaten to beat them, to kick them, or even to shoot them, if they set foot inside your house again. But it makes not the slightest difference; and on the following morning, when you descend from your room, you will find the entire gang assembled in the courtyard displaying their wares and beseeching you with importunate clamours to accept the terms they offer.

Nothing is more remarkable than the number of persons who attach themselves to your household in Morocco, and whom it is impossible to shake off. New faces appear daily; and if you inquire the why and the wherefore of their presence, you are generally informed by one of your servants that the stranger is a friend or a relative of his who has

merely looked in to pay him a friendly call. But in a day or two you find the friend or the relative still present, and doing odd jobs about the house in order to justify his inclusion in the heavy repasts at your expense, which are such a prominent feature of a servant's life in Morocco, as they are in a servant's life in more civilised communities.

It is no use trying to institute reforms. You must put up with the customs of the country, and remember that you are in the midst of a community who still enjoy the advantages and disadvantages of the feudal system.

If you are horrified at the vast expenditure involved and at the enormous quantity of viands that are daily consumed, and if you see ruin and bankruptcy staring you in the face, do not regard these disasters from a narrow, unspirited standpoint. Say to yourself: "I am a feudal lord, and these are my retainers. The more of them there are, the higher do I stand among the feudal nobility of the country. They have attached themselves to me and to my fortunes, and therefore I must justify the confidence they have placed in me. Over them I exercise supreme authority; they must obey my slightest whim; they must all rise at my entry; and when I sally forth into the streets, they must gather round in a solid body to keep off the crowds and push aside the laden beasts to clear a passage for their feudal lord. It is true I cannot long bear the expense, and that in another month or so I must leave the country or else go under

in the struggle. But while it lasts it is very pleasant,—this worship and this homage of a countless throng of indigent retainers; and if I fall the whole lot fall too. I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that, as long as I have looked after them well and displayed no meanness of spirit, although I may pass on my way and another may take my place, my name will never fade from their memories; and round the camp-fires in after life they will tell how they once served a great chief who knew how to rule and how to live.” The feudal system was a great one, and it made men happy and content with their lot.

We carefully selected our garments against the summons of the Supreme Khalif, and purchased the very finest robes that money could buy, for we had come to Fez without any European dress. The under garment worn next the skin is a long white cotton robe called the *shamir*, which seems to bear some distant connection with our own chemise. But I have anticipated, for, in order to be comfortable, you must first of all doff the *serwal* or baggy trousers which come just below the knee. Then comes the turn of the *shamir*; over it is worn an outer garment of white, with an opening down the front, and generally embroidered—this is called the *fahrajia*. Over the *fahrajia* is worn a long coloured cloth robe called the *kaftan*. This can be of any colour; and some are heavily embroidered with gold and silver or silk, and are very expensive. A man's station in life can generally be gauged from the quality of

his *kaftan*; but in the heat of the summer they are usually discarded. These three robes—the *shamir*, the *fahrajia*, and the *kaftan*—reach to the ground; but they are hooked up by the bearer wearing a long cloth sash round the waist, which lifts his robes to about half-way up the calf of his leg. Over the *kaftan* is worn the *jellab*—a long outer robe of wool, made of the very finest quality, and having a hood which is invariably turned up over the head in the streets. Over the *jellab* is worn the *sulham*, when the Moorish gentleman goes out to walk or ride. It is shaped like an opera-cloak, and also has a hood which is placed over the hood of the *jellab*, thus affording a double protection from the sun. The dress of the Moor is made complete by the ordinary yellow slippers with the heels turned down, and by the red *tarboosh* (turban). The *jeunesse dorée* of Fez take as much pride in having the *reisa* (white cloth band) carefully rolled round the *tarboosh*, as their *confrères* in London take in having their silk hats carefully ironed. There are many different ways of rolling the *reisa*, but there are only about two hatters in Fez who possess the secret and who set the fashion. They are greatly in demand, and charge a shilling each day the *reisa* is rolled.

The servant question is almost more pressing in Morocco than it is in Europe. Mahommedanism is the religion of democracy, and in the eyes of the Prophet all his followers are equal before God, and consequently with one another. Thus there is no servant class, properly speaking, for

there are no class distinctions. You can hire a man to work for you at a certain wage, and he will do the work after his own manner, which is usually not your manner. But if you wish to maintain him in your employment, it will not be by offers of an increase of salary, but by the manner in which you treat him. It is no use speaking roughly, giving way to abuse, or making threats, because in nine cases out of ten the offended one will clear out without a word of warning, and will not even bother to claim the wages which may be due to him. It is impossible for a European, once he has obtained a bad reputation for his treatment of servants, to get a Moor to enter his employment. The wealthy Moorish families employ negresses to do all their household work. They are slaves from the Soudan or from Senegal, and are sent up to Marrackesh, and from there to Fez. Slaves are sold openly in the market at Fez, and fetch from one hundred to one thousand dollars, according to their appearance and soundness of body and limb. But Europeans cannot employ negresses as servants, because the Moors are very jealous of their rights, and fear that a European, if he buys a slave, only does so in order to emancipate her. This they regard as a step toward the abolition of slavery, which they contemplate with dismay. If you wish to correct your Moorish servants, you must address them as you would an equal who has done you an injury; you must show them the evil of their ways, point out the in-

convenience to which you have been put, rub in your own exemplary conduct and the many kindnesses you have bestowed upon them, and in conclusion, draw a comparison between their conduct and the written word of the Prophet.

One of my servants, called Mohammed the Sheriff (that is, of the family of the Prophet), I strongly suspected of having stolen small sums of money, and also of other offences. When charged by me he stoutly denied the allegation, calling upon the patron saint of the Moors, the famous Moulai Edriss, the founder of Fez, to bear witness to his innocence; but the proofs were too strong even for Moulai Edriss to confute, and Mohammed the Sheriff had to acknowledge his guilt. However, he was equal to the occasion, and to rid himself of the unpleasant responsibility, he declared that an evil spirit had taken possession of his soul, and that he would try and drive it out. He then burst into tears of shame and left the room. A few minutes later I heard convulsive sobs and groans coming from downstairs, and on hastening to ascertain the cause, found him writhing on the ground, his hand grasping his throat, and apparently endeavouring to choke himself. I tried to get him to desist, but he only dug his nails deeper into his throat until the blood appeared. Then he sprang up, tore off all his clothes except his trousers, and, squatting on his haunches, began to tremble all over like a person suffering from a fit who has temporarily lost control of his

muscles. At the same time he gave vent to strange gurgling sounds intermingled with appeals to Moulai Edriss. He foamed at the mouth, and continually pointed in the air as if he saw some malignant spirit approaching. Mohammed had been bitten by a wild cat some days before, and I thought he might have gone mad in consequence, but my Assyrian interpreter told me not to be alarmed, but to wait and see what happened next, as he had probably only worked himself into a state of hysteria. Meanwhile, the cook hastened outside and bought some Moorish incense, which he placed in the charcoal brazier under the nose of Mohammed, who revelled in the fumes until the trembling in his limbs had ceased. He then rose and rushed about the garden until he found a long rope, which he coiled into many folds, and thus armed proceeded to give himself a good thrashing, uttering a short grunt of satisfaction after each stroke. The whole scene was reminiscent of those self-inflicted flagellations in which the monks of the Middle Age delighted. The next stage in the process of driving out the devil was somewhat alarming. The Sheriff walked towards the charcoal brazier and rested the rope in the flames until its many fibres were smouldering. Then with the lighted end he inflicted more self-punishment, twice relighting the rope when the fibres had gone out. Then he took his last and most decisive step to get rid of the evil spirit, and one which should have been effective. He

walked to the brazier and sat down on the burning charcoal until his breeches caught fire and he could stand the heat no longer. To extinguish the flames he wrapped himself in his blanket and fell asleep for several hours, awaking his normal self, and announcing that the devil had fled.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## FIRST AUDIENCE WITH MOULAI EL HAFID.

It is the custom in Morocco for the Sultan never to receive a visitor until three days after his arrival, and it was on the fourth day that a soldier came to summon me to the palace. This was my first visit to the vicinity of the Marzhen, and the ride through the narrow passages and streets which divide Fez Bali from Fez Djedid was one of supreme interest and picturesqueness. The streets were packed. There were fierce Berbers from beyond the Atlas, who had never seen Fez or any large town before. They wandered through the streets, gazing with wondering eyes upon the busy scene. A Christian in European clothes is an absolute novelty to these men,—descendants of the same race whom the Romans found in the country, and whom they vainly tried to subdue. Among the Moors, Arabs, and Berbers were hundreds of black-coated, black-caped Jews, with dark curly hair and long flowing beards, any twelve of whom would delight the heart of the painter who was looking for a study of the twelve Apostles.

Perhaps the Jews were more concerned than the Moors with the dynastic struggle in progress, for they stood to lose or to gain most by the change. A Sultan who is friendly towards them can make a vast difference to their lot; a Sultan hostile to them has it in his power to make their lot hard by a thousand petty persecutions; and a Sultan who wants money and who is determined to get it from the Jewish quarter, is indeed to be dreaded. But the Jews have lost nothing by the change of Sultans. Moulai el Hafid has treated them with just the same moderation and respect as his peace-loving brother, Abdul Aziz. He has demanded no money from them, and he has curtailed none of their privileges. The Jews appreciated this and were loud in his praises. His sojourn in the capital, together with the vast hordes of tribesmen attracted to Fez by his presence, brought about a much-needed revival in trade and renewed prosperity to the Mella (Jewish quarter).

Outside the main entrance to the palace I found the remnant of Abdul Aziz's European-trained army drawn up. They were resting in their ranks, seated on the ground, waiting for their new master to rise before rendering him the honour of guard-mounting. All were in uniform, and of these there were a great variety, for the designs and fancy of the instructors of nearly all the Powers of Europe were represented. Some were in khaki, some in green, some in a mixture of both; while yet others sported proudly the scarlet tunics and gilt buttons of our own Guards-

men. If the uniforms of the army were various, their arms and their method of handling them were still more so. The variety of rifles was infinite : there were Martinis, French Gras, and Chassepots, dating back to the Franco-German war ; there were Winchesters and Remingtons ; while a few of the very select bore Mausers, which they handled with the pride of a conscious superiority. Many of the soldiers carried their bayonets down the back of their necks, so that the cool steel might afford protection to their spines from the fierce rays of the sun, which beat down on the courtyard of the palace and scorched the skins even of the accustomed Moors. But the great feature of a Moorish army is always its band. They believe that a wild burst of music from countless instruments will cover a multitude of inefficiencies in drill, equipment, and even in martial ardour. Moulai el Hafid had collected round him all the musicians of Abdul Aziz, and has formed them into one vast band, which performs French and English airs very creditably. Drums are perhaps the favourite instrument : the wild roll of hundreds sends a thrill of joy through the hearts of the waiting crowds of tribesmen, who have never heard their like before.

Parked in front of the troops were the miscellaneous collection of field-guns, machine-guns, and mountain-guns which make up the artillery of Abdul Aziz's army. They are preserved with the utmost care, though very dirty, as are all the rifles handled by the Moors. The Arab relies on Allah to direct the flight of his bullet, quite irre-

spectively of whether the rifling is choked with the dirt of ages.

On entering the palace I found the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, formerly the powerful Caid of Abda, surrounded by his secretaries and scribes, seated under the shade of the great porch, transacting affairs of State. Si-Aissa is a swarthy old Moor, very strict in his religious observances, large of figure, withal a fine-looking man. He is very hard worked, having to appoint all the new Caids and to look after the department of Si-el-Madani-Glaui, the famous Caid of the Atlas, who is Grand Vizier or Prime Minister, but who is not much versed in affairs of State and in the conduct of a great office. I seated myself on a mat close to the Foreign Minister to wait my turn to see Moulai el Hafid, who was still in his private apartments. The scene around me was interesting in the extreme. It formed a unique study of opportunism, of the effect of the changing fortunes of monarchs on those who serve them. It cannot be said that man's character emerged either triumphant or with credit from the ordeal. Almost all those present had once been the faithful subjects and loyal servitors of Abdul Aziz; now all, from the Grand Vizier to the humblest negro who carried sweet tea or fresh water to the perspiring throng, were engaged in compassing his downfall. Less than a year before the majority of those present had watched, with loud lamentations, their Sultan ride under that same arch on his fateful journey to Rabat.

All the men who have played the leading rôle

in the Moroccan revolution were gathered round. Si-el-Madani-Glaui, who brought the Berber tribes to Moulai el Hafid, was seated next to the Foreign Minister — a handsome man with Mongolian features, and a long sweeping moustache, which curled downwards. Beside him was Si-Taib-Tassi, the new Minister of Finance, formerly a great favourite of Abdul Aziz, whose brother still remains faithful to his old master, and whose house has in consequence been confiscated and handed over to the Foreign Minister. A handsome Moor, with black curly hair, side whiskers, a black moustache and goatee, attracted much attention by his fine presence. He wore fine clothes, and carried a curved sword with a richly embossed handle. This was Si-Abdul Karim-el-Shergul, the Caid of all the tribes round Fez, who brought about the revolt in the capital in favour of Moulai el Hafid. Consequently he has been loaded with honours by his master, and is now one of the most prominent of men.

I witnessed an interesting and instructive performance of how affairs are managed in this strange land. Moulai el Hafid had arranged to receive deputations of the tribesmen that morning, who had come with their Caids to declare their allegiance and to purchase their reappointment. The band in the courtyard struck up a march, harsh words of command in Arabic caused the troops to fall in, and arms were presented. All the old airs so familiar to the loafer outside the gates of Buckingham Palace were played with such skill and precision that by shutting my eyes

I could almost imagine myself in London during the height of the season instead of in sun-scorched Fez 1500 miles away. This was the signal that Moulai el Hafid had left his private apartments and was ready to transact the day's affairs.

A Caid, followed by his tribesmen, made his way through the crowd surrounding the Foreign Minister. His face and demeanour were truly expressive of the thoughts which surged through his mind at that moment when he was about to put his fortune to the test. In each hand he held a canvas bag full of gold pieces; behind him came his sons, who carried more bags—in all \$20,000, as I subsequently learnt. They represented the savings of a lifetime, ground from the people who live under his rule. Now he was about to present them to his new Sultan and ask to be reappointed to his post. But the unfortunate man had no surety that he would again be made Caid; some rival might have already got the ear of his master and given a larger sum for the post. Then the Caid would be a ruined man, with the savings of his life gone and no means of getting them back. The same scene is enacted every day, for this is how Moulai el Hafid replenishes his Imperial Exchequer and carries on his campaign. Behind the Caid came tribesmen who led horses, the majority of them venerable screws with sore backs, as peace-offerings. The servants of the palace treated these deputations with great respect on their entrance, but directly their gifts were deposited in safety under lock and key their attitude changed. Many of the tribesmen lingered in the

courtyard to examine the palace, which they were seeing for the first time. The palace officials could not brook any delay, but drove them without further ceremony outside the gates to make room for those who had still to come.

At length my summons came to the Imperial Presence. Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar rose and beckoned me to follow him. As I was unable to speak Arabic, I was accompanied by Bibi Carleton. We made our way up some stairs between countless officials, all of whom were much worried because I did not take off my boots, and to whom it was necessary to explain the European custom. We passed through a room full of packing-cases which contained the gewgaws which have helped to make Abdul Aziz forfeit his throne, then down a narrow dirty passage, at the end of which was a sofa on which Moulai el Hafid was reclining. At his feet was a carpet on which we seated ourselves. The rooms around were entirely devoid of either carpets, furniture, or ornament, and amidst the squalor sat the monarch who in less than a year had moved his capital from Morocco city to Fez, and who had won over three-quarters of the country to his cause. A single attendant stood near him: it was his duty to kill the numerous insects that, alone maintaining their loyalty to their old master, made repeated and savage attacks upon the usurper. Why Moulai el Hafid chose this attic in which to receive us I cannot say, unless Abdul Aziz had so completely divested the palace on his departure for Rabat that there had been no time to restore it.

Moulai el Hafid, which means "The Heaven-Preserved," is a man of about thirty-four or thirty-five years of age, and he is one of the handsomest of Moors and of men I have ever seen. The upper part of his face strongly resembles that of his half-brother, Abdul Aziz. He has the same fine forehead and the same expressive eyes, which sparkle with good-nature and genuine merriment in an almost childlike manner when he is interested. But here the resemblance between the brothers ends. The lower part of Moulai el Hafid's face is far the stronger. He has a large nose, full cheeks, a square jaw, and a very full lower lip, and a black moustache and beard. His complexion is a dark olive. He was dressed in the ordinary costume of the Moor: a red *tarboosh* with a beautifully-rolled *reisa* on his head, a white cotton *sulham* or cloak, a white *jellab* with the hood turned up over his *tarboosh*, a purple inner cloak, a white *shamir*, which is the garment worn next the skin, and yellow *serwal* or baggy trousers. His feet were bare.

It is not etiquette for the Sultan to shake hands, so, after bowing, we seated ourselves at his feet on the mat beside the Foreign Minister. Moulai el Hafid first expressed his pleasure at seeing Europeans again back in the capital after a year's absence. "I have written," he said, "to the Legations at Tangier asking that the Consuls may be sent, but so far I have had no reply. I am prepared to guarantee their safety and of all who place themselves under my protection."

Then he paused, addressing a few words to the



Foreign Minister before continuing. "I am much distressed at the false reports that are circulated about me in the European press. Listen," he said, taking a paper from the Foreign Minister, "what a man like Caid Maclean writes about me. He says that if I am acknowledged Sultan it will throw Morocco back into anarchy and darkness, and that foreigners will be unable to live in the country or hold property here. He also says that I have destroyed all the evidences of European civilisation in Fez. Why," Hafid added with a smile, "I have given special orders that property shall be protected, and have put a guard on Maclean's own house.

"I am most anxious that Europe should know the truth about myself and my intentions. I am in no sense hostile to foreigners, although, as you will readily understand, I have to move carefully, considering the state of public opinion in Morocco at the present time. I want them to come and live in my country. I want to open up the country, to develop its trade, and to reorganise its finances, and I know that I can only do this with the assistance of foreigners. I am especially fond of the English, who have always been good friends to my country. I am most anxious to do nothing to offend the French, with whom I desire to be on terms of friendship, and I have been most careful, ever since I was proclaimed at Morocco city, to keep my followers from attacking their army in the Chaouia.

"I can't understand the attitude of the Powers towards me, and why they continue to recognise

my brother as Sultan when nine-tenths of Morocco has declared in my favour, and the coast towns are only prevented from doing so by the presence of the warships, for they fear that the French will bombard them if they do so."

I explained that it was the fear of upsetting the *entente* among the Powers, established by the Act of Algeciras, which stood in the way of his recognition. I asked what his attitude would be towards the Act.

Moulai el Hafid replied without hesitation: "I am prepared to abide by the Act of Algeciras, although the mass of my subjects are violently opposed to it; but I reserve for myself the right to call another Conference, when the country has quieted down from the excitement following the dynastic change, to reconsider some of its clauses. You see, the necessity for many of its propositions will disappear when once I have established a strong Government, for I will undertake to protect the lives and property of all myself. But until a convenient time arrives I am prepared to stand by the Act.

"What about the State debts contracted by Abdul Aziz?" I asked.

"I will accept," replied Moulai el Hafid, "full responsibility for all Abdul Aziz's debts contracted up to the time I was proclaimed Sultan at Fez. Since that date, if the Powers or private individuals lend him money, they do so at their own risk, for I will not pay a dollar more. I am prepared to let the French take their sixty per cent of the Customs on account of their

loan, though I reserve to myself the right to raise another loan and to pay them off if I so desire."

"What is your Majesty prepared to do to secure provision for Abdul Aziz's future in the event of his abdication?" I asked.

"I will make provision," he replied, "suitable to his former rank out of State funds. I will give a guarantee satisfactory to the Powers that such a sum shall be annually forthcoming."

"Now," Moulai el Hafid concluded, "I have told you exactly how I am prepared to act if I am recognised as Sultan by the Powers. I have been chosen by the almost unanimous vote of the tribes all over this country, and the responsibility for continuing the present civil war and unrest lies on Europe if the Powers continue to ignore my claim to recognition when I have repeatedly told them what I am prepared to do. The Powers may think that I am in need of money, and that I shall not be able to continue my campaign, but I have ample money for all my purposes, and more men than I know what to do with."

I stayed with Moulai el Hafid for nearly two hours, and he talked on many subjects of interest. He has a fascinating personality and much dignity, and the cares and trials of his strenuous campaign have left no trace on him.

I have repeated at length what Moulai el Hafid said at the first audience I had with him, because it was the first reliable communication that ever reached Europe as to the character and policy of the new Sultan. Through the columns of the

‘Morning Post’ I was enabled to make the Sultan’s intentions known to the Powers, and to contradict the reports so carefully circulated about him by the French and Azizist agents. Had the Powers but acknowledged Moulai el Hafid immediately it became known he would acknowledge the Act of Algeciras, a great deal of money and a number of lives might have been saved ; but France obstinately refused to admit the Pretender’s right, and resolutely continued to urge on Abdul Aziz to make his useless attempt to reach Morocco city and to regain his lost throne.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## FEZ AND ITS CITIZENS.

THE traveller, coming from the north, who has ridden for days without seeing a habitation, save the miserable smoke-blackened villages of the tribesmen, or the lonely *kasbah* of its Caid perched on some rocky eminence, is greeted by a panorama of unrivalled splendour when at length he debouches from the network of hills and dales to gaze on the valley and on the city beneath. Fez, old and new, from east to west, is in the possession of the eye, which regards with wonder and delight the variety of its design, age, colours, and altitudes; the richness and verdure of its countless gardens, and the defiant grandeur of its background of sun-parched hills. For eleven centuries Fez has lain at rest in its bejewelled valley, isolated from an unsought-for world, the unchanging and seemingly unchangeable, the stronghold of seven dynasties of Sultans, the most sacred shrine of Islam in Northern Africa, and the unchallenged centre of Arab art, knowledge, and culture.

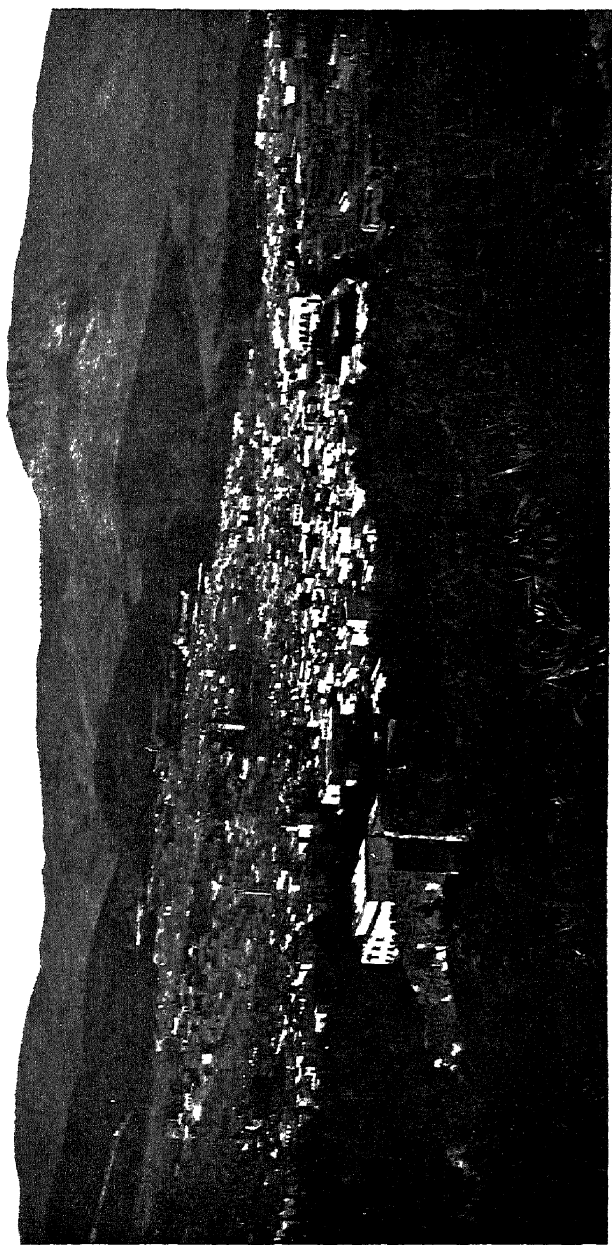
To the west a jumble of green roofs and minarets, sparkling above the sombre grey of an

ancient loopholed wall, marks the site of the Sultan's palace and Government buildings, better known as the Marzhen, the whole forming one immense *kasbah*, to which entrance is obtained through several fortified gates. Nestling alongside the Marzhen, as if clinging to it for protection from centuries of petty persecution, is the Mella, the Jewish quarter, a mass of white houses, relieved by patches of blue, which make a pleasing touch of colour in the transparent atmosphere. Beyond the southern wall of the Mella is the Jewish cemetery, crowded with white urns, all of a similar design; and still farther to the south are the Sultan's new gardens, forming an oasis of green in the sun-baked Sais Plain. This portion of the town is known as Fez Djedid or New Fez. To the north, on the high ground standing as its sentinel, is the Kasbah of Cherarda, a square grey fort, with salient towers made of mud and stones, and pierced with countless loopholes, formidable to the warriors and weapons of the Middle Ages, now merely pleasing to the eye of the antiquarian.

The eye, roaming eastwards to seek a moment's repose from the eternal white and grey of the Marzhen, the Mella, and the Kasbah of Cherarda, rests upon a forest of green which joins Fez Bali (Old Fez) to Fez Djedid (New Fez). The gardens of Bou Djeloud are the peculiar delight and pride of the Fasis. Here the famous springs of Fez find their source, and nourished by the moisture of the marshy soil, poplars, elms, mulberry bushes, fig-trees, orange-groves, and rose-trees mingle in reckless tropical confusion. Down through cen-

turies these gardens have been the favourite resort of the wealthy and cultured Arabs. After the fatigues of the day they love to wander beneath the trees, or to sit by the fountains where the cool spring water, bubbling upwards, imparts an agreeable freshness and humidity to the atmosphere.

But the eye merely wanders to the Marzhen, the Mella, and the gardens of Bou Djeloud, to return and to rest in wonder and veneration on the Medina. Beautiful though they be and worthy to be admired, they stand as mere suburbs to the glories of Fez Bali. Here the valley narrows and the hills contract as if the closer to embrace such hallowed ground, and the lower spurs, advancing boldly from the north and south and west, form a cup only open towards the east to allow the river to escape after it has refreshed and cleansed the town. In this cup a reckless archaic jumble of streets, houses, mosques, and minarets are heaped together, without order or arrangement, in such astonishing prodigality that the whole resembles not the work of man, but rather the freak of giants, who in the course of ages have thrown down stones from the skies and filled the cup to the brim. This mass of white, surrounded by the old wall of Moulai Edriss, and only relieved by the green roofs of the mosques and minarets, bounded to the west by the rich green of the gardens of Bou Djeloud, to the east by the continuation of the Sais Valley, and to the north and south by the many-shaded hills, glimmers and sparkles in an atmosphere of unrivalled transparency like an immense jewel.



*View of Fes.*

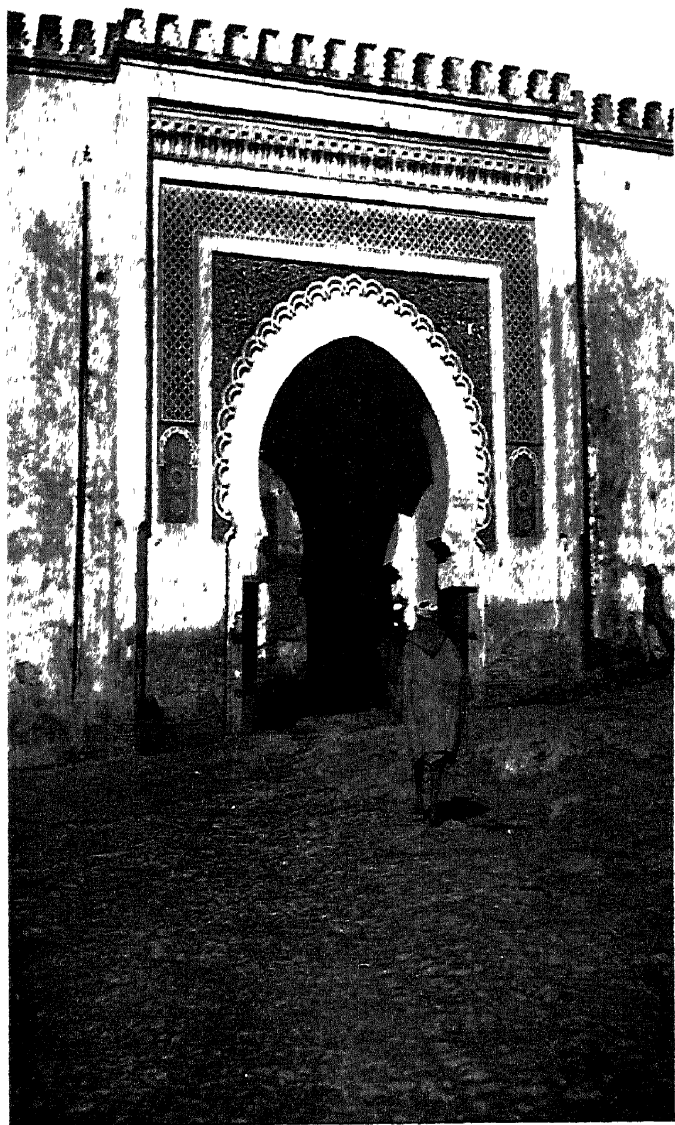




In the year 788 A.D., the first of the Edriss dynasty, of the sacred family of Ali, driven from Mecca by an unsuccessful revolt, travelled the whole length of Northern Africa, and finally found a refuge amongst the Berber tribesmen at Oualily, in Zerhoun. The tribesmen were delighted to welcome a distinguished Sheriff of the family of the Prophet, and appointed Edriss their chief. The second Edriss, finding the capital too small for an increasing population, sent his minister, Omeir Ben Mossab el Azdy, to select a new site for a town. In the course of his travels Omeir entered the valley at the northern end of the Sais Plain, through which flows the river Fez, and he was immediately struck by the beauty of the site, and more especially by its unique water-supply. In this valley the river Fez is joined from the south by the river El Zitoun, and in addition Omeir found sixty cascades of pure water on the hillside, bubbling from some subterranean source, and which, dashing down the rocks, added their welcome volume to the united rivers. Omeir searched no more, but returned to Oualily to report to his master that he had found a site for a city unrivalled in Northern Africa. The second Edriss hastened to the spot, bought the land from the Zenata tribe, and in 808 A.D. erected the wall which now surrounds Fez Bali. He divided the town into two quarters: that on the left bank of the river was named the Adouat el Karaouiynin, and that on the right bank the Adouat el Andalous. The Jews were also given a quarter called the Fondak

el Yehoudi, which still bears that name, though the Jews have long since been moved to the Mella in Fez Djedid. The original inhabitants of the town consisted of emigrants expelled from Ifrikiyah and Moors expelled from Cordoba. At the end of four centuries the population of Old Fez became too great, and New Fez was built on the rising ground to the west of Old Fez by the Emir, Yacoub ben Abdelhay. The Jews meanwhile had become so powerful that the town was in danger of falling under their control, so two years later the same Emir built the first Mella or Jewish quarter founded in Morocco. Later Sultans gradually built the mass of buildings which compose the Marzhen. In 1554 the city was besieged by the Turks, and in consequence the outer walls were constructed.

To descend from the hills and to pass through the gate of Bab-el-Mahrouq (where the heads of rebels have been hung for centuries) is like entering a maze, though no ordinary maze open to the skies, but a dark maze into which a ray of sunshine sometimes finds its way through the vines, rushes, and straw which spread from roof to roof, and form a canopy above the crowded streets. These streets—passages would be more accurate—are so narrow that laden mules can hardly pass, and wind in and out in such hopeless confusion that unless you are with a guide you will most assuredly be lost. Medina in Morocco means the business quarter. After you have wandered through it for a short time you realise how completely Fez and its inhabitants differ from the rest of Morocco,



*Gateway leading to the Marzhen.*



and how immeasurably superior are the habits, education, and institutions of its citizens. The boasted culture and civilisation of which you have heard so much, but in which you have lost all faith during your long ride inland, are now brought home with irresistible force. But the Fasis, civilised and cultured though they be, have not borrowed any of the second-hand attractions of Europe like the Japanese. Their customs and their culture are peculiarly their own, and have thrived for centuries, a bright torch in the Sais valley, whilst Europe was still plunged in the darkness and ignorance of the Middle Ages. As a general rule the fanaticism of a race subsides with its progress, for the wider its knowledge and education the more broad-minded and tolerant it becomes. Fez differs in this respect, as in almost all others, from the common rule. Its citizens are the most fanatical of all Mahommedans, and the execration in which Christians are held has been deepened by the aggressive action of France in the Chaouia and on the Algerian frontier. But the religious Moor is just, even when blinded by his dislike of the Nazarene, and he has divided the Christians of the world into two classes, namely, those who are French and those who are not. As long as he can vent his feelings on a French Christian, he regards with tolerance, even with affection, the Nazarenes of England and Germany, realising that they alone stand between Morocco and the loss of her independence. Religion is indeed the element of Fez Bali, which is regarded by the Moors as the most sacred centre of Mahom-

medanism, and their Sultan as the supreme head of the Prophet's children on earth, ignoring the claims of the Sultan of Turkey to that proud title. Therefore it is easy to imagine the feelings of the mass of the people towards Abdul Aziz, whom they accuse of having become a Christian, and to whom the contemptuous epithet of the Nazarene is frequently applied. The very air of the town breathes serious devotion. Every street has its mosque, and every mosque its devout worshippers at all hours of the day. No Christian dare enter, or even glance for that matter, within those sacred portals, for his life, in the present state of public opinion, would most assuredly pay the forfeit. It is best to hurry past the mosques with your head turned the other way, and to pretend to ignore or not to understand the muttered curses and pious throat-clearing which follow your polluted passage. How different are the ways of Fez to those of Constantinople, where a Christian, by removing his shoes and paying his sixpence, can enter the mosques and admire the architecture without offending the susceptibilities of the hardened Turk? It would be impossible here to describe in detail the innumerable mosques and saint houses of the capital. The most sacred shrine is the mosque of Moulai Edriss, where the founder of the city lies buried. Moulai Edriss is the father and patron saint of the capital. Everything is done in his name, and all the ceremonies—such as births, marriages, and circumcisions—are celebrated at the mosque which bears his name. Riding through the

streets the air resounds with cries of "Moulai Edriss!" "Moulai Edriss!" for the countless beggars and cripples call down blessings on your head in his name. The two largest and most famous mosques in Fez bear the titles of the two quarters into which Fez Bali was divided on its foundation, namely, El Karaouiynin and Andalous, and both were built in the year 859 by the sons of a rich widow who came to settle in the town. The former is so large that no less than 22,000 people can pray in it at the same time. It formerly possessed a famous library, taken from the King of Seville at the conquest of that province in 1285, but unfortunately the majority of the books and manuscripts have been lost in the succeeding centuries, as it was the improvident custom for the teachers who gave lessons in the mosque to allow the students to carry away the books with them. Other mosques of especial interest are the D'Abou el - Hassan, El - Bou Ananiya, D'Erresif, and the Sidi Ahmed ech Chaoui. The Sultan now attends the great mosque of Fez el Djedid, which forms part of the Marzhen, except on special occasions, when he may go to Moulai Edriss or to one of the many saint houses. Before leaving his capital for a journey it is the custom for the Sultan to pay a series of visits to all the principal mosques and saint houses, asking for blessing and protection.

The only simile which will give a correct impression of the Medina during the busy hours of the day is to imagine a human beehive, with each bee sitting cross-legged in its own little cell, with



thousands of others passing to and fro gathering their honey—the necessities of everyday life. These little booths are all of a size, namely, about six feet wide, six feet running back from the road, and four to five feet in height. In them you may find as many as half a dozen toilers, sitting cross-legged on the floor, each engaged in his particular trade. The variety of occupations is infinite: metal-workers, silk vendors, grocers, pottery sellers, charcoal-burners, leather-workers, fancy goods sellers, clothes outfitters, bootmakers, butchers, are all found in these same little booths, pleased to sell the smallest quantity of any article to the humblest of purchasers. But the marked feature of Fez is the astonishing number of its fruit shops, and it is no exaggeration to say that every other booth contains fruit and vegetables. The citizens of the capital rely largely on fruit during the hot weather, and they are supplied from their numerous gardens, and by the surrounding tribes, who do a good business with the capital. The principal fruits and vegetables are potatoes, very fine tomatoes, marrows, cucumbers, figs, water-melons, and mush-melons, plums, damsons, oranges, apples, and pears. Any vegetable or fruit will grow in this fertile soil and admirable climate. The prices are very low, and it is difficult to see how a profit can be made out of such innumerable shops all selling the same article; and, to add to the competition, there are numbers of hawkers who carry on a thriving business in the street, where they sit on mats and sell small quantities

to the poorer folk. Each Moor in the Medina is engaged in some trade, and the space occupied by each and his wares is so small that Fez has the appearance of being the most industrious city I have ever seen.

There are markets for all important necessities held in different parts of the town on various days of the week: there is the horse and mule market; the slave market, where the negresses, who, as servants and concubines, play such an important rôle in the households of the principal Moors, are bought or sold as slaves. This may seem a barbarous custom to Europeans, but it must be admitted that, once a comely negress has completed her journey from the interior, has passed through the market, where she is as carefully examined for imperfections as any horse or mule, and has finally entered her future lord's home, they form the most emancipated and happiest class in Fez,—their lives being infinitely preferable to what they would have led in their own wilds. Other markets are for grain, cattle, fuel, fruit, silks, and stuffs. The markets are under Government control, and Caid's are appointed to look after each, to regulate prices, to settle the disputes between purchaser and vendor, and to collect the tolls due to the Marzhen from the sale of taxable goods. The mule and horse market, which is held just outside the town every Monday and Thursday, is of peculiar interest. It is made the occasion for a gathering on the part of the principal citizens, who take a keen interest in

examining and bidding for the principal animals. They are as critical judges of size, shape, action, and pace as the most faithful *habitué* at Tattersall's. The mules and horses are tethered in rows, and can be examined by any would-be purchaser. The Moor assumes just that same knowing look which brightens the countenance of the most ignorant of English horse-lovers when running his fingers down the legs of a prospective purchase. The animals are brought out in turn by their owners to show their paces. The riding mules are carefully watched for their powers of ambling; the pack mules, who are shown with their packs on their back, must be strong, active, and well-seasoned; and the horses are chiefly prized, as far as I can gather, for their capacity to go 100 yards at top speed and then stop dead, thanks to the useless cruelty of the Moorish bit. The horses and mules are sold by auction under rules rather different to those in force at Tattersall's. At the fall of the hammer the animal does not necessarily become yours unless you drag him quickly out of reach of further temptation, for the owner will always reopen negotiations if a higher or more promising bidder makes his appearance. But this little defect is remedied by another excellent and salutary rule which enables you to buy animals with confidence. Every purchase is taken before the Government vets, who do their duty in a very conscientious manner, and for a small fee will pronounce on the soundness of your choice. They also ask the price, and if

they consider too much has been paid they will knock off a certain number of dollars.

Trades - unionism is no recent innovation at Fez, for it has existed for centuries whilst still undreamt of in the industrial centres of Europe. The workers in the various trades bind themselves together, and appoint representatives to look after their rights and interests and to negotiate with the officials appointed by the Marzhen to regulate the industry and civil life of the capital. Fez is divided for administrative purposes into eighteen quarters, which are administered by representatives chosen from among the citizens by themselves, but who have to receive the approval of the Marzhen. They are responsible for the collection of taxes, the upkeep of the roads, the water-supply, and the policing of their district.

It is a little surprising to leave a country where a great struggle is still waging over such questions as public education, salaries of teachers, the feeding of school children, the care of the sick and aged, hospitals, public morality, and, above all, how to deal with the indigent poor, and ride into the interior of barbarous Northern Africa to find oneself in a city, generally supposed to be uncivilised and far behind the march of events in Europe, where all the social questions which are now racking the Continent have been settled ages since, and now work with a minimum of friction of economic loss to the State and of moral weakening to the people. I have heard of military expeditions to tame the Moors, but I never heard of a Royal Commission taking the trouble to come to

Fez to study social problems first hand. The funds necessary for the maintenance of the poor, sick, and aged, the funds for maintaining the various charities of Fez, are derived from the mosque property, and are administered by officials called Habous, who are supervised by various Caids appointed by the Marzhen. The Habous look after the education of the youths of Fez, and when the latter come from the interior to study at the Metropolis they find them suitable lodgings, introduce them to reputable tutors, and show them where good and economical meals may be obtained. But the paternal interest of the Government does not cease here, for it makes a daily allowance of bread to all students, rich and poor, and where a scholar is devoid of means will provide him with the other necessities of life. Thus at Fez every child studies on a full stomach. The system of paying tutors is also salutary, for his salary depends on the progress made by those under his charge, and presents of *mouna* (food) and money are sent by the parents as the child reaches the various standards of his education. The usual age for school attendance is five, and the child remains until eleven or twelve. There are besides fifteen girls' schools at Fez, which are also regulated by the Habous, but in these the attendance is not so strict, and they have not found such wide favour as the boys' schools. The Habous are likewise responsible for the administration of outdoor and indoor relief, and are charged with the upkeep of the homes for the sick, blind, and abandoned children, of whom, thanks to concubinage, there are a great number.

Outdoor relief is distributed at various centres daily to all those who have received the authority of the Habou of their district to draw it,—soup in the morning, meat at midday, and in the evening the national dish *coscous*. The Habous, in their peculiar capacity, are also charged with the upkeep and supervision of the public baths, of which the splendid water-supply of the capital allows of an unlimited number. These are open to men in the morning, women in the afternoon, and can be hired for a very low sum by whole families at night. They also look after the public bakeries, to which the inhabitants carry their home-made loaves to be baked, and their favourite luxury, a baked sheep's-head. The Habous also regulate the water-supply, and are responsible for the cleansing of the streets and for the disposal of refuse. The city of Fez has one official, named the Mohtaseb, who occupies a unique position. His authority is unbounded, and he is subject only to the direct orders of the Marzhen, and unless he be a man of upright character and above the temptations of his office, his opportunities for speculation and abuse of power are unlimited. His position is analogous to that of a mayor, but a mayor free from the votes of a town council and the interference of a local government board auditor. The Mohtaseb supervises the institutions of the town and those who administer them, and his functions are principally those of a supreme court of appeal. The Habous are charged with the inspection of the markets and schools, and the collection of taxes is also under them. If there

is a dispute about a bargain he is the final arbitrator; he can regulate the price of necessities according to his will; he can open or close the public baths and markets; and he can dismiss teachers and appoint them. Wielding such immense power, the selection of the Mohtaseb has to be made with extreme care.

The houses of the wealthy Moors are all of a similar design, and from the outside are most unprepossessing. The walls, painted white, are pierced by no windows overlooking the streets. One enters through a door, usually large enough to allow a mounted man to pass, to find oneself in the garden where orange-trees, rose-bushes, and much mint (required for flavouring the green tea) are grown. In a corner of the garden is the fountain which supplies the house with drinking water, and round the fountain are built a series of pavilions in which your host, his harem, and his numerous slaves reside. The floors of all the rooms (the houses are never more than two-storey high) are invariably paved with tiles; the walls, sometimes tiled, are usually whitewashed. The houses are kept spotlessly clean by the negress slaves, who are ever ready to hand with pails of water from the fountain. There is little furniture in a Moorish home, and you recline on mattresses and cushions, after removing your shoes at the outer door. Many of the wealthy Moors have large brass bedsteads, surmounted by a canopy, which in turn is crowned by an enormous gilt coronet. These choice imitations of the age of Elizabeth are made in Birmingham, and are much

prized by their owners. Strange to say, they are not slept in, but are kept purely for show, for the springs are taken out and the mattresses allowed to slip through on to the floor. The harem is kept quite apart from the quarter where the guests are received, and never, under any circumstances, are you permitted to see the wives of your host. If you enter unexpectedly and they happen to have strayed from their own quarters to those of their master, they at once double under cover like a lot of rabbits disturbed by the report of a gun.

The other business quarter of Fez is the Mella, where the 15,000 Jews live isolated from the Moors. The Mella is an institution peculiar to Morocco, and is the subject of much divergent opinion and comment. Coming from a country where the Jews hold a position second to none, where gradually the control of its finances is passing into their hands, where year by year their wealth, their influence, and their capacity for mutual support become more and more manifest, it is surprising—perhaps even a trifle refreshing—to find amongst the savage tribes of Morocco that there is an inviolable line of demarcation drawn between the native owners of the soil and those aliens whom the charity of former Sultans has allowed to settle in their midst. The Moor in his attitude towards the Jew is still guided by the natural and legitimate determination to maintain the supremacy of his race, as was laid down by a Caid after the revolution which broke the power of the Jews. “We ap-



preciate your utility and your many excellent qualities," says the Moor, "and we know that in many ways you are superior to ourselves; but, at the same time, experience has taught us the perils which we undergo by having you in our midst. Therefore, as the soil of our country is our own, and as you have voluntarily placed yourselves under our protection, relying on our kindness, our generosity, and even on our simplicity to provide you with a wide and fruitful field for your peculiar enterprise, you must for your part abide by the rules which we have laid down for the safeguarding of our interests and the regulation of your lives and habits. We admit that, commercially, you are our superiors—thanks to the patience and tenacity of your temperament, which have been gradually acquired after long years of relentless persecution in all parts of the world, to the frugality of your lives, to your power of obtaining the last denarii out of any bargain, and to the fact that your only interests in life are the observance of your religion and the attractions of commerce. Sport, pleasure, and profession of arms play no part in your concentrated lives. But we are different. We share none of that love of toil peculiar to your race. We are a joyous people, delighting in good living, music, and outdoor exercise. We love to quarrel with our neighbours and go on expeditions against them. We like to sit for hours meditating on the eternal goodness of Allah, who has provided us with a fertile soil and so many charming wives. We would not

part with our easy-going, pleasure-loving, procrastinating dispositions for yours, which contain the solid qualities which go to make what is called success. Therefore, unless we safeguard ourselves, we would be swamped by your industry and your commercial astuteness before we had time to realise that our freedom was slipping from our grasp. Once in our history, before we regulated your lives and habits, you became too powerful, so that you ruled our town. You lent us money at such high rates of interest that our houses, and even our mosques, were mortgaged to satisfy your demands. A revolution squared the account, and since then, by careful precautions, we have managed to preserve the upper hand. We give you a portion of our fair city: we have surrounded it by a high wall, and it shall be your home. You are free to wander where you will by day, but at sunset all of you must be within its gates. In this enclosure you may own property, build houses, and open your shops. As you increase and multiply in numbers the property in the Mella will rise enormously in value, and therefore a unique opportunity will be afforded you of exercising the peculiar powers of your race in acquiring and concentrating everything in the hands of the few. This will not be done in easy competition with puny antagonists, lovers of pleasure like ourselves, but in open, fierce, sustained competition with one another. Here the fires of your energy will find a worthy fuel, and the eventful triumph of the few who will absorb and devour the holdings of the many will reflect

infinitely more credit on the successful than had their wealth been obtained from amongst ourselves. You shall regulate your own lives, be free to exercise your own religion, and to have your schools and charitable institutions, and also your own prisons for minor offences. During the day you may leave the Mella and trade in our markets; you may attach yourselves to the great Caid, and become their financial advisers, and make large profits by catering to their needs. We for our part will provide you with a Caid whose business it will be to watch over the Mella, to see that our regulations are obeyed, and to protect it from any outburst of mistimed fanaticism. Another official shall see that perfect justice is done in any civil or criminal cause between Moor and Jew. But to maintain the outward and visible sign that we are masters and you but tolerated aliens, you must never leave the Mella except in a black gown and in bare feet. You must enter the presence of a Moor in an attitude of obsequious respect. You must never ride outside the Mella on horses or mules unless it be to journey to a distant town; and, as a peculiar sign of your subserviency, it shall be your privilege to remove the old heads from the Bab el Malobu and to hang up those of fresh rebels when they are brought in from expeditions."

In consequence of these regulations the Jews have suffered less real persecution in Morocco than in Europe. But the result of this concentration of Jewish perseverance and astuteness into a limited

space, where the fires for want of fuel consume themselves, has made the Mella a unique study of contrasts in wealth and squalor. When you pass through its gates and enter its narrow, filthy streets, with the upper storeys of the houses protruding over the lower, and almost shutting out the light, you imagine you have entered His Majesty's Theatre during the performance of the "Merchant of Venice," to find not one Beerbohm Tree, but thousands, pouring out of every street, imitating his peculiar gestures of avarice, rage, triumph, and despair; while from the upper storeys of the old houses countless Jessicas gaze upon the busy scene below. The filth of the streets is indescribable. Every household throws its refuse out of the windows, and only the disinfecting rays of the African sun save the town from an epidemic. As it is, the mortality from small-pox is great. Some of the Jews are in the last stage of poverty, and others are possessed of wealth and splendour. Lazarus reclines on the offal-heap thrown from the palace of Cræsus. Yet when the two rub shoulders in the streets it is difficult to tell which is the rich man and which is the poor. Their garb is similar, so also is their manner of dressing their hair and trimming their beards. Cræsus walks in all his splendour whilst Lazarus cringes by, searching the offal-heap for a rejected crust. But in Morocco the glory of accumulated wealth does not remain with the possessor until he reaches the walls of heaven—it merely carries him to the gates of Mella. There Cræsus sinks to the shame of Lazarus. Both

must remove their shoes and wend their way through the streets barefooted. Croesus may own a thousand horses or mules, yet he must trudge the streets with poor Lazarus. Both must dress in a black cap and black outer robe, through which all the silks and brocades of the Orient cannot shine. Both must enter the presence of the children of the Prophet bareheaded, and both must expect to be insulted and jostled, just as was old Shylock by the Venetians: both must eat of the unleavened bread of a despised race. The rich Jews of Fez care nought for outside appearances, and the entrances and approaches to their homes are invariably humble and unpretentious: the glory of a Jew's life is to build himself a house on land of his own and to bestow all his care on the decoration of the interior, and it is not until you enter that you discover evidences of wealth and prosperity. Some of the houses in the Mella would attract attention in any city in Europe, whilst others are mere hovels which would be closed by the authorities. Beautiful mosaic floors and walls, richly decorated ceilings, carved wood-work, and stained-glass windows, and every luxury and comfort of the Orient, are found in the former; whilst in the latter, dirt, squalor, and misery are shared by the overcrowded tenants. Yet these two houses may be adjacent to one another, and this is what makes the Mella so unique; for there are no distinct quarters, the one devoted to the rich and another to the poor. The rooms in the fine houses are few, but large and airy, and almost

as devoid of furniture as those of the Moors. It is the custom for the family to continue to live together after the sons have married, their wives being brought into the house and joining the family circle. Thus, in some of the houses you will find, in addition to the owner and his wife, four married sons and their wives and children. The Jewish women of Morocco are small but comely, but as they never exercise they become too fat to please Western eyes. What a life they lead! Married sometimes at six years of age, and generally at about eight, they hardly ever leave the house afterwards, except to stand on the doorsteps and gossip with their neighbours, or to climb to the flat roofs in the cool of the evening. During the day the wives of the poor work at their household duties. They do all the cooking, washing, and the making and baking of bread. In addition, they usually have large families to look after, so with such a multitude of tasks they speedily become worn and ugly. If the poor are worked too hard the rich suffer from a want of occupation. They recline about the house all day, eating sweets, drinking tea, and apparently interested in little save bedecking themselves in gaudy robes and dressing their hair with long false plaits. Such is the Mella, where an alien population of 15,000 live, crowded in a space about the size of St James's Park, cut off from their co-religionists in other parts of the world. When they die they are taken outside the walls and buried in the Jewish cemetery, where thou-

sands of their brethren lie at rest. Some of the Jews are worth two or three million dollars, others beg their way from door to door. All the old well-known names are to be found : there are Cohens, Isaacs, Abrahams, Levys, and a multitude of others familiar to the biblical student.

## CHAPTER XX.

## HAFID'S DIFFICULTIES.

THE months of July and August were critical not only to Moulai el Hafid personally, but were fraught with momentous consequences to the future of Morocco. My audience with the Sultan was the prelude to many others, and I was kept fully informed of all that passed throughout this period, and was frequently consulted by Moulai el Hafid and by his Ministers, and asked to give my views on the situation. A State, whether barbarous or civilised, in the throes of a dynastic struggle, presents an interesting study, not only from the political standpoint, but also because it places men in unexpected positions, and consequently gives such an insight into human nature. It cannot be said that man emerges with much credit from the ordeal. During a revolution, such as was taking place in Morocco, the eventual outcome is the unknown quantity which only the future can decide, and the participants are kept guessing until fortune has made the final bestowal of her favours. No man's position is assured, and those who are on top to-day may find themselves



underneath to-morrow, and no man can tell whether he will be a loser or a winner in the end. Thus every individual is racking his mind to discover which is the best course to adopt, and full of anxiety lest he should throw in his fortunes with the wrong leader. Few are animated by a desire to take the course which appears to be morally the just one, and opportunism is the only standard that attracts. The Moors are no exception to the general rule: the moral principles which govern their public lives are lax, and in politics it is the endeavour of each to set his sails in order to meet every changing breeze of public opinion. It is impossible for all to guess aright: some, so to speak, put their money on the wrong horse and suffer, and others who are animated by no higher motive, but who happen to have backed a winner, reap the rewards which few, if any, deserve. The great men are those who have the courage to take a decisive line from the very commencement, and who stick to their opinions whether they lose or whether they win, without an attempt at compromise or retreat. The disappointment of failure is well balanced by the respect which consistency, even if misplaced, must always inspire, and at the present time those who stand highest in the opinion of Moulai el Hafid are the followers of Abdul Aziz, who remained faithful to him to the end. Fez during the months of July and August was an excellent study of opportunism. The affairs of Morocco were in such a muddle that no one dared prophesy what would be their outcome. Consequently it was the desire of the

majority to avoid committing themselves too decisively either for Abdul Aziz or for Moulai el Hafid, and each endeavoured to leave open some little door which would take him to the eventual winner. Fez had consented to proclaim Moulai el Hafid as Sultan under certain well-defined conditions. Moulai el Hafid accepted these conditions, but within three weeks of his arrival found himself obliged to repudiate his contracts, therefore the Fasi began to ask themselves what they had gained by getting rid of Abdul Aziz and placing Moulai el Hafid on his throne. The following were the conditions under which Fez consented to acknowledge Hafid: (1) That he would forbid foreigners to enter the capital; (2) that he would abolish the tobacco monopoly; (3) that he would not reimpose the taxes of Abdul Aziz; (4) that he would not allow the Jews to ride or to wear their shoes outside of the Mella; (5) that he would renounce the Act of Algeciras; (6) that he would take no foreigners into his employment or grant them concessions. To these terms Moulai el Hafid gave a tentative consent, but with a wink of the imperial eye, and within three weeks of his arrival he broke most of them without causing a rebellion in the town, because once he was established on the throne the Fasi were afraid to express their disapproval of his conduct. Hafid allowed foreigners to enter the town; he re-established the tobacco monopoly; he reimposed all the old local taxes; he protected the Jew; he promised to abide by the Act of Algeciras, and engaged two Europeans to act as instructors for his troops.

But although they were obliged to accept the *fait accompli*, the Fasi were not reconciled to their new ruler, and a large section of the townspeople only awaited an opportunity to express their forcible disapproval. The city was divided into two parts, the one solid for Moulai el Hafid, whilst the other talked secretly of the return of Abdul Aziz. The Azizists were mostly to be found amongst the business classes, who had enjoyed special trading rights during his reign, and who had made large sums of money by catering to the reckless extravagance of that monarch and his corrupt gang of followers. These gentlemen felt that their bright day of spoliation and speculation was at an end with the advent of a Sultan who was determined to restore the prestige of the throne and to do away with the abuses of the last reign. Therefore they intrigued to bring about his downfall. The agents of this party filled the European, and especially the French, press with false reports, which they sent off in shoals to Tangier day by day. They were to be found at the palace eating the Sultan's bread and enjoying his protection and favours, yet doing all in their power to blacken his character and to make Europe believe that his success was purely temporary, and that his downfall might be hourly expected. One of these men, the agent of the French post office, a native Algerian who spoke French perfectly, came to see me day by day. His conversation always opened up in the same manner. Drawing me into a dark corner (beloved by the conspirator), he would whisper in my ear,

“Je vous assure, monsieur, que la chute de Hafid est seulement une question des jours. Il n’a pas des armes ni d’argent ni d’ammunition. Les Fasis le detestont. La ville est prêt de proclamer Abdul Aziz le moment qu’Hafid quitte Fez.” Day after day this gentleman would come to me with this same story. The party who favoured Abdul Aziz were held in subjection by Hafid’s firmness, for from the first the new Sultan made it perfectly clear that any attempt at rebellion would be put down with an iron hand. Therefore they were obliged to keep quiet, and to confine their efforts to talk for the time being, but they looked for their opportunity when he left Fez, when they intended to re-proclaim their former master.

Hafid was very disappointed that he was not immediately acknowledged by the Powers on his arrival at the capital. He pointed out that the entire country had now declared in his favour, with the exception of certain of the coast towns, and that they were only overawed by the presence of the French army and of the foreign warships. “France,” he would say, “has repeatedly declared that she would maintain strict neutrality between my brother and myself, but if she really intends to do so, why does she not allow me to enter the Chaouia and attack him at Rabat, for then the struggle would be over in a very short time. Why does not England intervene to secure me my rights?” Indeed Hafid had good grounds for his complaints, and it was difficult to make him understand that public opinion was so badly

informed in Europe, and that few, if any, understood the true situation in Morocco. It was still more difficult to explain to him that England had no independent policy, owing to her compact about Egypt, but was simply content to support any action which France chose to take. I pointed out to him that the Powers were but little interested in the internal affairs of Morocco, but were determined to maintain the peace of Europe. Therefore they were loth to part with a Sultan who had signed the Act of Algeciras, which had brought about this desirable consummation, without receiving some substantial guarantee that his successor would abide by its provisions. "But," Hafid replied, "I have promised to sign the Act of Algeciras, although it has brought me trouble with my own subjects, and therefore why do they not acknowledge me." I told him he was like a race-horse which had won the race, but could not claim the prize until after the weights had been verified, and to have patience, for everything would come all right in time. It was impossible to make Hafid believe that France intended to maintain a strict neutrality. He had good grounds for his fears, but such was the strength of Hafid's cause, and so hopeless his brother's, that even with the active support and co-operation of the French the unfortunate Abdul Aziz could never have regained his lost throne.

It must be confessed that the neutrality of France at this time was of a very one-sided character, and might almost be said to have amounted to prejudice. Reports constantly reached Fez of

the assistance Abdul Aziz was receiving both in money, arms, ammunition, and instructors, and it was even rumoured that the French army intended to travel a day's march behind him, so as to give him its moral support when he commenced his march on Marrackesh. How could any of these actions be reconciled with an attitude of professed neutrality? Time and time again Hafid sent for me to put to me the same old question: "What is France going to do? have I got to fight my brother and the French at the same time?" I assured him that France would not dare go beyond the mandate given her by the Powers, namely, to restore order in the Chaouia, and that her troops would not leave that district. Then early in July came the news that General d'Amade had occupied Azamor, after driving out the troops of Moulai el Hafid, and had placed the town once more in the possession of the Azizists. This was a direct violation of neutrality, and the news caused tremendous excitement and consternation at Fez. No amount of explanation would satisfy Hafid and his Ministers that the French would any longer keep clear of the struggle, and they firmly believed that not only would the French army conduct Abdul Aziz to Marrackesh, but they would also shortly march on Fez. Moulai el Hafid was beside himself with rage, and for a time considered the question of immediately proclaiming a holy war, thus uniting the whole of Morocco under his standard, and attacking both the French and his brother. Perhaps it would have been better for

his reputation in history had he adopted this course, for although he would most certainly have been beaten, he would nevertheless have gone down to posterity as a great patriot who preferred to wage one last struggle for Islam rather than rule as a puppet of the Powers. The Azizist party in the town held up their drooping heads, and began to talk openly of a speedy return of their former lord; but their hopes were doomed to disappointment by the news that arrived a few days later from Europe. This was to the effect that the French Cabinet had repudiated the action of d'Amade, and had ordered him to withdraw from Azamor, and to confine his operations strictly to the Chaouia. This had a reassuring effect on the capital, but it did not inspire much confidence in Mulai el Hafid, who continually declared that it was only a blind, and that if he attempted to attack Rabat the French army would at once sweep down upon him.

Meanwhile the internal troubles of Morocco daily increased. Hafid was worried by the divided counsels of his followers, by the lack of money, by the shortage of arms and ammunition, by the difficulty of keeping his small army together, and by the disorders amongst the surrounding tribes. The court was divided into two parties, the "Northern" and the "Southern." The former was composed of those who had thrown in their lot with Hafid on his arrival at the capital, and the latter of those who had joined him when he first set up his standard at Marrackesh. The chiefs of the Southern party were the Glaui, the powerful

Caid of the Atlas, and the Caid of Abda, Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar. These two chiefs were the main props of the new dynasty, and without their support it is doubtful if Hafid could ever have brought his enterprise to a successful conclusion. But their position was a difficult and a delicate one, for the M'Tougi and other chiefs were still in open revolt in the south, and Si-Aissa and the Glaui had long been absent from their homes. Also, both preferred the solitude and seclusion of their mountain fastnesses and the unchallenged authority which they wielded there, to a life of intrigue and office work at Fez. Both were anxious to leave the capital, the atmosphere of which was uncongenial to them, and to return to their homes. But they wished to take Hafid with them. They maintained that he ought to put himself at the head of the biggest *mahalla* he could collect, and advance towards Marrackesh to attack his brother the moment he crossed the Oum Rebia river, thus quitting the Chaouia. They declared it would be fatal if Abdul Aziz was allowed by some mischance to reach the southern capital. Hafid, they argued, would not survive the blow to his prestige. Rumours would be circulated that he was dead, and the southern tribes might be induced, even against their will, to acknowledge his brother once again. The Southern party believed that the question of recognition which was Hafid's ostensible reason for remaining in Fez was one of no immediate importance, and would follow as a matter of course the moment he had decisively defeated Abdul Aziz, and driven him for ever from



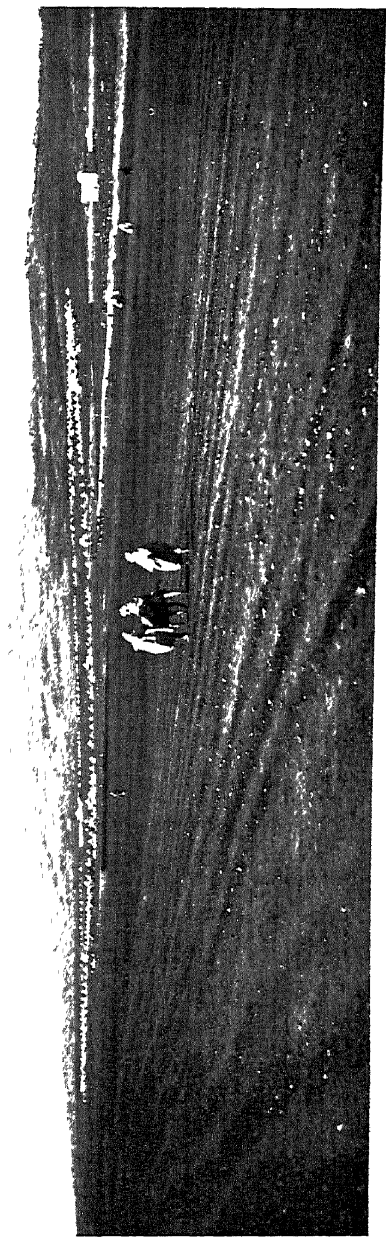
the stage. These arguments appealed strongly to Moulai el Hafid. He is a man of active temperament, who likes to be up and doing, and the prolonged delay at Fez, during which his own fortunes seemed on the wane and those of his rival to daily grow brighter, began to tell on him. He also was unaccustomed to the ways of the Marzhen and to the atmosphere of intrigue and petty manœuvres which environ the throne. He no longer felt himself an independent chief who had fought his way to power and position, but rather a semi-prisoner in the hands of the Fez Cabal, who concealed the true state of public opinion from him, and who really did not have the true interest of the country at heart, but only sought place and power for themselves. On the other hand, there were the views of the Northern party to be considered, and these finally prevailed. Those who had thrown in their lot with Hafid after his arrival at Fez trembled lest he should depart from the capital and leave them to the mercy of the counter-revolutionists. They warned Hafid that if he quitted Fez there would be a revolution in the town, and Abdul Aziz would be re-proclaimed, disorders might ensue, and the lives of the Europeans and of the Jews might be endangered, and thus an excuse would be given for a more pronounced French intervention in the affairs of Morocco. They told him it would be fatal to his prestige in the eyes of Europe if he left Fez before he was acknowledged by the Powers. As long as he remained at the capital he was a great central

figure, ever in the public eye, but at his departure the French agents would circulate false reports of his forced expulsion by an indignant populace. If he disappeared for a long period in the centre of Morocco chasing his brother, it would most assuredly be said that his followers had deserted him.

Between the conflicting claims of these two parties Hafid hardly knew where he stood. Both he and his Ministers consulted me, and I strongly advised him not to quit the capital under any circumstances, and if he did, to march straight on Tangier with the largest *mahalla* he could collect, and thus prove to the Legation by his presence who was the real master of Morocco. In the end a compromise was arrived at: Hafid consented to the departure of the Glaui and of Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, who were to take with them a large *mahalla*, which was not to leave Fez until it became perfectly certain that Abdul Aziz really had the intention of marching on Marrackesh.

It is a mistake to suppose that in a barbarous country like Morocco, where modern principles of government are not understood, there is no attempt at organisation, or that everything is left to chance. Hafid did his utmost to establish a stable administration. He appointed Caid and organised *mahallas*, sent them off to threatened points, and despatched many letters setting forth his real intentions to the Powers. The army was his chief concern. Hafid had under his command, between Marrackesh and Fez, over 36,000 men. Of this number 12,000 had served

in Abdul Aziz's late army, or had enlisted since, and they were drawn from those tribes whose privilege it is to supply the fighting men of the Marzhen. They were paid at the rate of a peseta a day, or they should have been, had the pay been forthcoming, which was not always the case, and they were equipped at the expense of the Government. The remaining 24,000 consisted of contingents furnished for the most part by the southern tribes, where lay the chief source of Hafid's power and influence. Each tribe sent a certain proportion of men and horses, who served for six months, and were then replaced by others. The great Caids kept these contingents in the field at their own expense, and they promised, in the event of Hafid sending round a *harka* or emergency summons, to bring their contingents up to a total of 70,000 men, and to maintain them at that figure as long as the necessity lasted. There were serving in his armies over 100 Caids, who had received some kind of military education. Hafid's 36,000 men were divided into four armies, as follows: No. 1 held Marrackesh; No. 2 occupied the line of the Oum Rebia river from Tadler to near Azamor; No. 3 held the territory of the Zaian; whilst No. 4 was stationed at Fez, and from it expeditions were despatched to Tetouan, Alcazar, and other important localities. It will thus be seen by a glance at the map that for many months the Hafidists held the Chaouia in a circle of steel, and that that district alone, out of all Morocco, still remained nominally faithful to Abdul Aziz, thanks to the presence



*Camp of the Mechalla outside Ires.*



of the French at Casa Blanca. The three *mahallas* of Marrackesh, of the Oum Rebia river, and of Zaian, could be concentrated at any point within two or three days, should the Sultan try and break through the ring which surrounded him. Moulai el Hafid would have entered the Chaouia and attacked his brother but for the presence of the French army, which he felt would never allow him a free hand. He desired to steer clear of the French, and therefore he issued the strictest orders that no attack was to be made on Abdul Aziz unless he left the territory occupied by d'Amade's army. Week after week the Arabs waited patiently for the march of their former Sultan, hoping against hope it would be made, and perfectly confident of their ability to deal it a smashing and decisive blow. Meanwhile a large *mahalla* was organised at Fez, well equipped and provisioned, and having all the available workable guns attached to it, and, as I have already said, its command was destined for the Glaui and Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar. It was moved into camp two hours from the town, its destination kept secret. This *mahalla* was to remain at Fez until it became absolutely certain that Abdul Aziz had really left Rabat and was marching on Marrackesh. It was then to move rapidly on Tadla, and should Aziz cross the Oum Rebia, to slip in behind him, and thus cut off his only line of retreat to the Chaouia,—provided always that the army of General d'Amade did not support Abdul Aziz. The strategy shown by the Moors on this occasion was admirable. They

intended to let Abdul Aziz get within a day or two days' march of Marrackesh unmolested. Then all the tribes were to attack him simultaneously, and his defeat was regarded as a foregone conclusion. Meanwhile the Glaui's *mahalla* from Fez, having slipped in behind him, would cut off his retreat from the Chaouia, if possible, and secure his person. But, as so often happens in warfare, the execution of a strategical plan was not so admirable as its conception. The tribes at Marrackesh did their duty admirably, but the great *mahalla* was a day late in reaching the Oum Rebia river, and thus Abdul Aziz, although decisively defeated, was able by a great stroke of luck to regain the Chaouia, and place himself under the protection of the French army.

The various reports from Rabat and Casa Blanca kept Fez in a continual state of ferment. It was almost impossible at this period to obtain any reliable information. One day heard that Abdul Aziz had left Rabat with a large *mahalla* and many guns and gunners drawn from the French army in Algeria, and that he had been joined by many tribes in the Chaouia and was making excellent progress towards his goal. On the next day a report would come in that he had left Rabat, that his followers had immediately deserted him, that he had been attacked by the neighbouring tribes and was now a prisoner in their hands. This would be followed by a rumour that he was still quietly enjoying life at Rabat, and had no intention whatsoever of quitting the town. Then another report would come that he had left Rabat with

a small force, and that General d'Amade with his entire army was accompanying him. Each one of these rumours upset the Marzhen and disturbed the time-servers and opportunists who trembled at the ups and downs of their former and their present master. I had to give my opinion day after day as to which I believed to be the truth. I judged from what I knew personally of Abdul Aziz and Moorish methods that the Sultan was probably sitting quietly at Rabat taking very small interest in what was going on around him, and that it would be extremely unlikely that even the French would be able to induce him to leave the safety of the town wall and risk his neck in a futile attempt to recover a throne which he, of all people, knew well was irretrievably lost. Indeed, Abdul Aziz would never have started on his fateful journey had he not been goaded on to do so by the French, who from the first were animated by a bitter and almost unnatural hatred towards Moulai el Hafid. Meanwhile the reports from the south continued to be most reassuring, and proved beyond all doubt that the Berber tribes could be relied upon. "Do not trouble to come yourself," they wrote, "if your presence is needed in Fez. We promise you we will defeat the Nazarene"—for such is the contemptuous term they apply to Abdul Aziz—"the moment he comes within reach of our arms." There were so many false alarms that at last the tension became considerably relaxed, and few of the Moors ever believed Abdul Aziz had any serious intention



of leaving Rabat. But this delusion was dispelled towards the end of July by a curious occurrence, which shows how often the greatest events may turn on little trifles, and also how careful one should be with one's letters. I was sitting in my house one very hot day, when a Moor brought me a letter written in French, and explained through my interpreter that there was no one in Fez who understood that language but myself, and, therefore, would I oblige him by translating it. I took it up, not expecting to find anything of interest therein, but was surprised, on looking at the signature, to see that it was from Dr Verdon, Abdul Aziz's physician, and written from Rabat, five days previously. It was addressed to the bearer, his former servant in Fez, and ran as follows :—

“I wish you to deal with the things I have left in Fez, as follows : Sell the medicines which are in my dispensary, and obtain the best price possible for them. Carefully pack my wine, and have it placed in a room with all my furniture, and when this has been done, have the door locked in the presence of Mr Mokwar, the British Postal agent, and hand over the key to him. Anything perishable or which the rats can get at, like mattresses and cushions, you can sell. On the wall is hung up a valuable Japanese dagger, which I prize greatly,—have it packed carefully and sent to Tangier. When you have done all this and have sealed up the room, set out immediately for Marrackesh, where you will meet me, for I leave

Rabat in a few days' time with Abdul Aziz and a large *mahalla*, and expect to arrive at Marrackesh in about a month from now. You can take sufficient money for your journey from the sums you obtain from those goods which you sell.

“(Signed) VERDON.”

This was the first reliable piece of information that had reached Fez of the real intentions of Abdul Aziz, and I lost no time in communicating it to Hafid, who immediately made every preparation for the despatch of a big *mahalla*.

Hafid was greatly handicapped by the scarcity of money, and the means to which he was obliged to resort to replenish his exchequer were not calculated to bring about the desired reforms in the administration, either naturally or morally. He aroused the anger of the people of Fez by reimposing the *octroi* duties and the market dues which had not been collected for over a year, since the departure of Abdul Aziz, and by this means he was able to secure a revenue of about 2000 dollars a-day, that is to say 14,000 a-week, a sum of under £2000. The customs receipts which form the main source of the State revenue did not reach Hafid, for under the Act of Algeciras they were collected by the State Bank, and after the French had taken their 60 per cent, the balance was held at Tangier until the Powers should decide which of the rivals was to be recognised as Sultan of the country. Thus Hafid was obliged to rely on what he could obtain from the tribes, on voluntary gifts, and on the proceeds of the sale of positions.

Every deputation of tribesmen from the interior brought him gifts, but these for the most part were in kind, and added little or nothing to the Imperial Exchequer. A Caid who brought cash in hand was a *rara avis* who was sure of a good reception until it was handed over, when he would be summarily ejected from the Palace like the most humble of his followers. The high offices of State and the governorship of the various towns and districts fetched very considerable sums, and it was by the sale of these that Hafid kept on his wobbly throne. Many of the wealthy Moors were prepared to pay 36,000, 40,000, 50,000, or 60,000 dollars for a position which they coveted, knowing well that if only they could keep their authority for a certain number of years they could reimburse themselves and even make a handsome margin of profit by grinding down those who were placed in their power by the Imperial rescript. But naturally this system led to the gravest abuses, introduced a Government founded on corruption, and in many cases aroused the hostility of the tribes, who suddenly found foisted on them a strange chief in the place of their former popular ruler, who had been outbid by a stronger or more wealthy rival. Nevertheless, Hafid cannot be blamed for the course which he took: he had no alternative, and was obliged to cut his coat according to his cloth.

A Mohammedan people enjoy one great advantage over all others,—they never suffer from the anticipation of that which is to come, and, as a natural result, they can always enjoy the present,

although only a few hours may separate them from disaster, or even from death. Their implicit belief in an ordained future imparts a dignified repose and outward calm to all their actions. Thus in spite of the trials and troubles which threatened the State during my stay at Fez, a smooth surface of unchangeable serenity veiled the inner thoughts of every individual, from the Sultan to the nigger at his gates. On what were their minds concentrated during these eventful days? Apparently on the most trivial matters. An English Department of State during a war, home disturbances, or a financial crisis, presents a scene of indescribable bustle and confusion. Every official, from the harried Secretary of State to the bemedalled commissionaire at the hall-door, looks worn-out and ready to drop. Tempers are testy, collars become soft, harmless inquirers are jostled about with small regard, and hasty meals, snatched at odd intervals, throw the frail human machine still further out of gear. When the period of stress is over there are gaps in the ranks. Some have resigned, unable longer to withstand the departure from the normal speed of life, and others have even succumbed to the wear and tear of critical times. Now is all this necessary? Do we not attach too much importance and urgency to those affairs which revolve in our own particular orbit? Could we not in this respect study with advantage the Mohammedans, and in some measure acquire that repose and control of the feelings which spring from the power to completely detach the mind from the past and from

the future, and to concentrate it on the enjoyment of the present. Undoubtedly, to obtain this perfection the observation of certain outward forms common to the whole community is very necessary. These must become so much a part and parcel of the life of the nation that the question of setting them aside in times of emergency, and thus deranging the daily routine, never arises, because no emergency, not excepting death, can equal the importance attached to the observation of these outward forms. Thus Mahomet, when he ordained that the Holy Men should ascend the minarets and call the faithful to prayer seven times a-day, did more to steady the nerves of his followers and to preserve their health than all the rest-cures and quack medicines of Western civilisation. It is not the actual prayers which do the good (though far be it that I should belittle their salutary effect!),—it is the complete detachment and rest which they bring, and the accompanying break in every individual's occupation at certain hours of the day. Surely it would be an excellent innovation if Secretaries of State, officials, business men, and Members of Parliament were obliged to carry mats under their arms, and at fixed hours to rest, and, if of a religious turn of mind, to pray. This practice, if introduced into Europe, would materially assist to keep all in a slow and measured tread. During a Cabinet Council, when some polemical measure was under discussion, such as the "Abolition of the House of Lords," "Votes for Women," or "Old Age Pensions," surely there would be fewer wild decisions, internal

dissensions, and hasty resignations, if, as at the sound of the muezzin's voice calling the faithful to prayer, our Ministers adjourned to their mats and rested awhile.

How differently do they behave under similar circumstances in Fez! The affairs of State are conducted at the Marzhen, which is made up of the Sultan's palace and Government buildings. The scene is far more animated and picturesque than the outside of a Government Department at Whitehall. Ministers and officials do not arrive in cabs and taxis, but each rides up on his horse or mule, accompanied by a numerous and resplendent retinue. The saddles are of many colours—purple, red, orange, and green,—and each rests on a foundation of blankets, ten in number, all variegated, and this mass of colours shows up well against the white of the palace. Inside the courtyard, which is large and rectangular, the officials, sightseers, and petitioners crowd under the arcades, seeking shelter from the broiling sun. At the far end is the Sultan's pavilion in which he gives audience, and the majority of those in the court below are waiting to see him. Some have been for days in attendance, others for weeks, and although their patience merits reward, the majority will go away disappointed unless perchance they bring gifts to the Sultan, which will give them a precedence over the empty-handed. Those who are rich have the better chance, for they can anoint the palms of the long line of hungry servitors who guard every step of the Sultan's stairway. The unfortunate who have

no money stand but a poor chance of gazing on the Well Beloved. During the mornings the Foreign Minister is always in attendance on the Sultan at the palace to make presentations. He is installed in a little room thickly matted and carpeted, the only furniture being a small desk containing paper, envelopes, and sealing-wax. Here the staff of the Foreign Office sit for hour after hour, apparently waiting for something to do. If a letter has to be written and despatched, it is handled with the utmost care and deliberation; and if a consultation is held, it is conducted on the same leisurely lines. For the rest, each official remains master of his own thoughts, takes snuff, others fall asleep, and at intervals an old nigger, carrying a goat's-skin and brass cups, hands water to the thirsty Under-Secretaries of State. Occasionally a series of regular thuds from the courtyard arouses a faint interest among the onlookers. They come from a corner where a little group of palace servants have assembled, and the sound is produced by punishment being meted out to some slave who has erred, and who has been sentenced to so many strokes of the birch-rod, which may run into three figures. This throws a great strain on the executioner, and after one becomes tired another steps into the ring to take his place, so that a uniformity of stroke may be obtained throughout. The victim is held down by four attendants, but the negroes, who are a stoical race, seldom struggle or cry out during this visitation. It must be borne in mind that even this leisurely programme is suspended every Thursday,

which is a Day of Rest, and every Friday, which is the Mohammedan Sunday, and whenever a reasonable excuse can be found for a holiday it is invariably seized upon. I have known State affairs adjourned, at a critical period, for twenty - four hours, to celebrate the anniversary of the marriage of the Sultan's wife's sister. Even the agitated times through which we were passing allowed of no departure from this settled routine, and the patriotic Minister who saw the precious moments slipping by, comforted his conscience with the reflection that Abdul Aziz and his advisers were taking matters just as easily at Rabat. In Morocco it is not etiquette for one political party to steal a march on the other.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## SOCIAL LIFE AT FEZ.

IN the midst of the exciting times through which we were passing I was a recipient of much kindness and hospitality from the leading Moors of Fez, especially from the Ministers. Almost daily I was entertained to dinner or to supper at their houses, and nothing could have been more pleasant than these semi-barbaric feasts. One party I remember in particular, for it was given by the Foreign Minister, Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, at the command of Moulai el Hafid, in honour of the few Europeans who had then drifted to Fez. Si-Aissa is a remarkable man, the typical chief of a large and powerful tribe, and the typical father of a multitudinous polygamous family. This splendid type of the Moorish father has sixty-three sons, all of whom can ride with the exception of the youngest, a child of three, and they form a mounted escort for their father. It may be assumed that Si-Aissa's daughters outnumbered his sons in the proportion of two to one, and thus the Foreign Minister's family approaches the very respectable figure of two hundred, which should at least ensure

for him the commendation of President Roosevelt. Si-Aissa had a very fine house at Fez, formerly the property of Tassi, Abdul Aziz's Finance Minister, who robbed the State and filled his own pockets so successfully. On the arrival of Hafid at Fez, Tassi's house was confiscated, together with 35,000 dollars found buried in the garden. When Si-Aissa is not at the palace he conducts affairs of State sitting in his garden, and it was here that he gave his dinner to the small party of Europeans. On our arrival we sat for a considerable time before our host made his appearance. You are always kept waiting in Morocco, even if you arrive an hour behind time yourself. Si-Aissa is, however, one of the most punctilious of men in the performance of the ritual of his religion, and he allows no circumstance to stand between him and the observance of his faith. When at length he appeared, followed by a single attendant carrying a mat, he passed us without salutation, gazing neither to the right hand nor to the left. Walking to the fountain, he carefully washed his face and hands, and then knelt in prayer on the mat, his gaze fixed towards Mecca. His prayers were carried on with the greatest animation, and frequently he would rise to his full height, only to fling himself on his face after the manner of those abdominal exercises prescribed by Sandow. His devotions lasted twenty minutes, and judging by the frequent side-glances in our direction he was making a special appeal to Allah to forgive him for entertaining the infidel. His prayers at an end, Si-Aissa greeted us cordially, and gathered us round him in a circle, where we

sat cross-legged on mats, so as to be in reach of the dishes, which are placed in the centre. A Moorish feast is of the most primitive kind, although the food is good and well cooked. All the familiar adjuncts are missing. There are no tables, chairs, plates, knives, forks, spoons, cups, or glasses. No drinks except water out of a bowl, which is passed from hand to hand, and green tea which is served in little cups at the end of dinner. There is just the one large dish, round which all gather and each secures what he can, grabbing for the choicest portions. Dinner generally consists of four courses: two of stewed meats, one of roast chickens, and the fourth of the national dish *cos-cous*, which is made of ground corn, and can be served with meat, like a pilau, or made up as a sweet. At your side are placed large dishes filled with sliced water-melons, which take the place of drinks. At the end of dinner more fruit is brought in, and a slave hands round cup after cup of sweet tea flavoured with mint. At first the idea of eating out of the same dish with your neighbour with your fingers does not appear very attractive to the European, and at times it is a difficult process, but habit soon reconciles you to the change, and you find that in many ways it has its advantages over the usual method. When roast chickens were brought in I thought they would be difficult to carve with the fingers. The mystery was quickly solved by the Foreign Minister, who seized one of the birds and tore it into its natural divisions with remarkable skill. When the last dish is removed a slave enters with a bronze basin, a kettle of cold

water, and a piece of soap, and each guest washes his hands. The dishes are then borne away to serve at a dinner of minor officials, after which the leavings are conveyed to the soldiers and servants. During this dinner given by Si-Aïssa-Ben-Omar I noticed a continuous stream of ill-clad tribesmen who came in at the front door, marched solemnly past the spot where we were at dinner, and then went out at the back. The reason for this procession I only learnt afterwards. It was a harmless deception on the part of Si-Aïssa-Ben-Omar, who had arranged that deputations of the tribesmen should see us Europeans at dinner in order that they might return to their homes with the tale that Moulaï el Hafid was already recognised by the Powers, and that the Foreign Ministers were at Fez. After dinner we were entertained by Moorish musicians. The four most talented in Fez had been hired for the occasion: one of them thumped a guitar, another a triangle, and the other two played violins upside down as if they were 'cellos, the four singing the while the most passionate and indecorous love-songs. The result was a dreadful dirge, which would most certainly have been fatal to any courtship under Western rules. One of the four was famous as a comedian. He had red hair, a fair skin, and side whiskers after the manner of a rural groom. He could imitate any species of animal or bird with great skill, but his *pièce de résistance* was to take off various tunes he had heard on the gramophone. The result would have driven Edison, even recalling his own early discordant notes, to

despair; but it sent the Foreign Minister, the great Caids, and the Under-Secretaries into convulsions, and of course we laughed too at Morocco's Dan Leno. Thus the evening passed. Such was the peace and detachment, that it was impossible to believe we were isolated in a city seething with fanaticism, while outside its walls civil war raged. It was an admirable lesson how to leave the past to the past, the future to the future, and to take the present as the gods ordain.

In spite of the interest and originality of my daily life, it must be confessed that a sojourn at Fez during the hot summer months is not one of unmixed pleasure. The heat during July and August was the severest I have ever endured, and the Moors themselves were visibly affected by it. The town, which, as I have already described, lies in a cup between the hills, simmered in the sun like some great white jewel, and the whiteness of the houses attracted the rays and affected the eyes. There was no wind and no rain. Day after day the same mighty ball of fire rising, passing, and gradually sinking to rest with a dull monotony. No one ventured out of doors unless the business was of the most urgent character. Here the townspeople do little but sleep from ten o'clock in the morning until half-past five or six during the heat of the summer. It is then that you appreciate the construction of the Moorish houses, for they have no windows looking into the street, and thus the sun's rays cannot penetrate into the room, and the walls are so high that you get

a maximum amount of air, and the tiled walls and floors also serve to keep the room cool. Even during the night the heat was frequently so great that it was impossible to sleep, and you lay awake longing for some snow in which to roll your weary limbs and to give a little ease to your aching brow. The hours just before dawn are the coolest, and I usually rose at about four o'clock, had breakfast whilst it was yet possible to eat, wrote letters and got through any business. It is impossible to get your servants to work during the heat. They lie down, roll themselves in a blanket, and sleep; you wake them up, and half an hour later they are sound asleep again. The Moors have the most extraordinary capacity for sleeping. No matter under what circumstances of physical discomfort, or when they should be in a state of mental excitement, they will always sleep if you give them ten minutes by themselves. I suppose this is due to the fact that they have no intellectual occupation for their minds except that which they derive from intercourse with their fellow-men. There are no books in Morocco, and the mass of the people cannot read or write. Even the educated and cultured classes seldom read anything outside the Koran, and a few books of Arab poems and love-songs. Abdul Aziz had a few standard English classics translated into Arabic, and also one or two historical works, and it is said that he derived great pleasure from a perusal of them; but it is doubtful if anybody else has any acquaintance whatever with European literature or history. It

is difficult to understand how a people who have neither books nor magazines nor newspapers fill the immense void of their spare hours. Yet from what I have seen I greatly doubt whether the spread of education and indifferent literature really tend to the intellectual improvement or to the happiness of the mass of humanity. When one compares the state of mind and the lot of the lower classes of Morocco with the lower classes in the great centres of civilisation, it seems to me the former are infinitely the more prosperous and contented. It is as well to remember what a man loses of natural instinct by always having the means of snatching ideas and of acquiring second-hand knowledge of the facts of life from the written word of others. He becomes less dependent on those natural laws which animals rely on. He loses that instinctiveness and that intuitiveness which assist those who have to do everything for themselves, and who learn the lessons of self-support by actual experience, in contact with nature and with the beasts of the field. Then the myths, the fables, and the folk-lore which play such a prominent part in the lives of semi-barbarous communities, are entirely absent in modern civilisation. The habit of story-telling also dies out where everything can be read in the halfpenny press. Which sight is the more attractive, that of the interior of a public-house with the inmates standing round hardly uttering a word, and drinking glass after glass of beer, with perhaps one member of the

party reading occasional extracts of crime or sport out of a halfpenny paper ; or that presented by a party of light-hearted Arabs seated round their camp-fire, under the blue sky and the pale-faced moon, drinking tea, laughing like children, and telling each other endless stories of their ancestors, of the saints, and of the great days of Arab conquest and of Arab glory. When the heat of the day was over it was very pleasant to take a ride outside the walls of the town, but it was considered dangerous to go very far, on account of the hostility of the tribes to Europeans, and also to the number of bad characters that are generally to be found lurking round the outskirts of big cities. There are, however, some delightful excursions to be made in the neighbourhood of Fez, and I have ridden many miles from the town and have never been molested except on one occasion. I was riding one day with a young Frenchman named Vautier, and we were passing a little hill, round the foot of which the road ran, when on happening to look up we saw a Berber tribesman reclining on one knee and taking a pot-shot at us with his rifle. We were then about seventy yards away, but I saw he was only armed with an old flintlock gun, and that he would probably wait until we were about thirty or forty yards nearer, as these old Arab rifles do not carry very far. In order to continue on our ride we had to pass the hill, and it was an awkward dilemma, as we only carried revolvers, and desired above all things to avoid any trouble which might endanger Moulai el Hafid's



position in the eyes of Europe. We therefore decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and suddenly turning our horses we rode off in the direction from which we had come, leaving our worthy friend the bloodless victor of the field.

At the beginning of August Moulai el Hafid sent for me one morning suddenly. On entering his presence I found him worried and out of humour. Without wasting time in explanation, he asked me if I thought it possible to raise a loan for him in Europe, as he was reduced to almost desperate financial straits. I told him frankly that, as he was still unrecognised by the Powers, and considering the state of unrest all over Morocco, a loan was not likely to have great attractions for European financiers. I added, however, that it might be possible to arrange a deal if he was prepared to grant a concession to work the mines of Morocco. Hafid was pleased with the idea; and after prolonged negotiations, details of which will be found in Appendix I., a provisional agreement was drawn up by which I obtained the sole and exclusive right to work the mines of Morocco for a period of forty years, on condition I found the money Hafid required. This was the first concession ever granted by a Sultan of Morocco to work the mines.

A

## CHAPTER XXII.

## DEPARTURE FROM FEZ.

HAFID ordered his Vizier to make every preparation for our journey, and to provide us with mules and an escort of soldiers. We were kept waiting for several days by the official Hafid had appointed to accompany us, who took an immense time to get his clothes packed and to find animals for the journey. Carleton, myself, and our servants left Fez on Sunday, August 9, and camped at a village one hour outside the town, there to await the arrival of our companion, who promised to join us that evening. But he did not turn up, so we sent a soldier back, threatening that unless he put in an appearance on the following morning we would go off without him. At 7 A.M. he rode up, and we made a start. It was essential to travel quickly, because we wished to catch the P. and O. boat on the following Tuesday from Gibraltar, which meant crossing from Tangier on the Monday. This would not have been difficult for Carleton and myself, but our friend Ben Jeulin, Hafid's secretary, had to go to Tetuan, which was the only coast town that had so far declared for

Moulai el Hafid, and had he gone to Marrackesh or to Tangier, he would have been arrested by the supporters of Abdul Aziz and imprisoned as a pro-Hafidist.

This journey in the middle of August was the most trying and unpleasant I have ever made, and it was rendered worse by having to travel so quickly for the reasons I have already stated, and also owing to the hostility of some of the tribes who were fighting on the road. We wished to pass before they discovered our presence and interfered with us. We passed over the Sais plain, and entered the hills which lead to the Ben Amat. The heat was terrible, the mules only crawled, their tongues lolled from their mouths and they gasped for air. But there was not the suspicion of a breeze anywhere, not even a tree to provide a little shade and enable you to escape for a moment from the great ball of fire which scorched up every living thing and brought tears to the eyes. I do not think there is any suffering so great as that produced by excessive heat. Excessive cold is unpleasant, but after a time it numbs the faculties, and long before a person is frozen to death they have practically ceased to suffer. But heat has just the opposite effect,—the more you endure it the more sensitive you become, until you finally collapse. Fortunately, we were wearing Moorish dress, and the long, loose, flowing robes, with the two hoods turned over the head, kept the sun off the back of our necks, and saved us from sunstroke, assisted by large green umbrellas, which are carried by the better class Moors. At



*A Sandy Stretch.*



half-past twelve we arrived at the Fez river, where we found a small *mahalla* encamped, and decided to rest for a while until the heat of the day had passed. We unloaded the mules, put up the fly of a tent, and tried to get some rest under its miserable shade. But it was too hot to eat or sleep. We could only drink, which made matters worse. I think this was the hottest day I have known, and even the Moors, accustomed as they are to the climate, collapsed under it, and the unfortunate mules lay down, too weary even to graze. The white tents of the *mahalla* lay simmering in the sun; the soldiers were asleep inside, the horses tethered close at hand. At 3 P.M. we made a fresh start, and had just taken down our tent when, without any warning, a tremendous thunder-storm burst over the country. It was ushered in by a sudden gust of wind, which raised a whirlpool of sand, which swept down on the camp and completely obliterated it from view. Then came a crash of thunder, followed by another wind-storm; the sand was blown in great clouds across the camp, and swept away the tents of the *mahalla*, exposing the warriors inside, who were seen vainly endeavouring to hold down their blankets and clothes. Many of the horses broke loose and galloped to the river to drink. So hot was the air that you felt as it were in the blast of some mighty furnace, the doors of which had been suddenly thrown open. Fortunately most of our baggage had not been unpacked, and could not be blown away. Before lying down to sleep we had taken off all

our clothes, except our baggy Moorish trousers, and directly the storm burst I packed the others away in a waterproof bag, and ran about a hundred yards to the river and lay down on the bank, thus trying to avoid the sand which got in your eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, and nearly stifled you. After the sand-storm, which lasted about ten minutes, during which time you could not see five yards away, there came more thunder and great flashes of lightning, and then a perfect deluge of rain, which, descending and mingling with the sand, as if in mortal combat, plastered your skin with a mixture of mud, sand, and water. But the rain soon got the better of the sand, which was forced back to the earth and turned into mud, until the sun had sucked up the moisture. I have never seen anything like the deluge of rain. I have often read in books of it coming down in sheets, but the reality was far greater than any picture which my imagination had previously created. It was a solid bank of water, which hid everything from view, which seemed to crush the life out of everything it struck, and which filled the river in a few minutes, transforming it from a dribbling rivulet to a rushing torrent of yellow mud. But what a glorious bath that was! The water was cold, and it speedily cooled the air, the sun disappeared altogether, and you almost forgot and forgave the suffering it had caused you as the rain trickled down your back and cooled your heated body. I wished it could have lasted for ever, but after ten minutes or a quarter of an hour the

storm had passed, and the sun once more resumed its sway. Then I looked for the camp, and a miserable, pathetic spectacle it presented. Hardly one of the white tents was standing, and hardly a horse remained tethered to its pole. The tents were scattered over the country side, or half buried in mud and sand; and the Moorish warriors, so picturesque and resplendent in their long flowing robes half an hour before, were now miserable, bedraggled, shapeless masses of soaked cotton and linen, and looked as if, owing to some error, they had been sent to the laundry with the week's washing. Our baggage was in a pitiful condition, but still we were all far more cheerful, and so were the mules and horses, which had become quite lively and willing to resume the journey. We packed up and made off, having six or seven hours more to do before we could stop for the night, as we wished to reach the Sebou river and camp on its bank. For the next two hours it was almost as hot as it had been before the storm, and the ground dried with astonishing rapidity. We kept plodding on, trying to ease our thirst by eating melons and drinking water, but the water was scarce, and when you did get it, the storm had made it so muddy that even the animals refused it. Finally, thoroughly exhausted, we fell into a kind of mechanical progression, keeping on hour after hour, without saying a word or attempting an unnecessary movement. Night had fallen—for there is little twilight in Morocco, and we were still some distance from the Sebou. At length we despaired of reaching the river, and our mule-



teer selecting a neighbouring village, we decided to rest awhile. It was ten o'clock before we reached this village, which was perched on the side of a hill some way from the Sebou. It was an inhospitable spot, a wretched site for a camp. We unloaded the mules outside, but the Caid declared we must come inside, as the neighbouring villages were very hostile to him, and he had lost two men killed in an affray a few nights before. But we preferred to risk the hostility of the Moors to the bites of the fleas and insects of the interior of a Moorish *kasbah*. We did not pitch our tents, as we decided to start at 2 A.M., so as to make five or six hours before the sun appeared again. During the day it had been too hot to eat, and when we reached camp we badly wanted a meal. We had had great difficulty in procuring a cook at Fez for the journey, and at length secured the services of a miserable Jew, who declared he knew how to cook all the best known simple European dishes. But when we put him to the test we found he could not cook even a potato, and our first dinner he spoilt by mixing everything with some horrible rancid oil, much in vogue in the Mella, the smell of which makes you almost sick. On this evening we tried to get him to cook something, but he knew nothing whatsoever about the simplest dishes, and, tired as we were, we were obliged to prepare our own meal. This was of a simple character, and consisted of some soup made from soup tablets, an indifferent omelette, and a stew of chicken and rice, made by the Moors. We then lay down, and I was almost asleep when I was

aroused by the sound of someone sobbing loudly. I got up to find out who it was, and saw the miserable Jew surrounded by our Moorish servants and a few recruits from the village, and they were busily engaged in the old time-honoured pastime of "Jew baiting," once so popular and so much in vogue in England. Mohammed, the Sheriff, always to the fore in times of trouble, was threatening the Jew with tortures and I do not know what else, for having said he could cook and obtaining a dollar a-day and then turning out to be utterly useless. The other Moors gathered round in a circle and were rolling him over, pulling his clothes off, pinching him, roaring with laughter, and crying out the whole time, "Yahoudi, Yahoudi," which means "You Jew, you Jew." I told them this game must cease, and that if one of them molested him again I would give him a hundred lashes. The Jew rushed to me and commenced kissing my feet, much to my embarrassment, and I was glad to escape from his affectionate transports, as he had no great claims to excessive cleanliness. We then went to sleep. At 2 A.M. I woke up and roused all the servants, who cursed and swore and tried to go to sleep again, declaring it was unsafe and impossible to travel in the dark, whereas the night before they had thoroughly acquiesced in the arrangement to start early. The Rabbit, who had been greatly subdued by the heat, absolutely refused to bestir himself. He rolled himself in his blankets, and all the kicking had no effect on him. Finally, we rolled him just as he was down the

hill, and when he reached the bottom the only sounds we heard were loud snores coming out of the darkness. But we were well on our way by 3 A.M., and were well rewarded, for it was delightful travelling in the cool of the early morning. We reached the Sebou at 6 A.M., and I had a fine swim across the river, which at this point is nearly a hundred yards wide. Once on the other side we rode at a good pace to the Warga river, reaching the Warga village at 9 A.M., just as the sun was beginning to make itself felt again. Here we decided to remain for some hours and erected our tent. The day turned out so hot that none of us had the energy to make a fresh start, and we lay under the shelter of some trees, trying to sleep and resolutely determined to travel the whole of the night and to reach Alcazar on the following morning. Towards evening we were surprised by a visit from a European, who explained that he was journeying to Fez. This was a certain Dr Wilkinson, who was on his way up to try and get the appointment of official doctor to the Sultan. He also had arrived at the village that morning and had camped there, but we had not discovered each other's presence until just before nightfall. I found him under the charge of my old friend Absalam, Caid of Shamaka, and Wilkinson had many complaints to make of his behaviour, declaring that he could not get him to make a start in the morning, and that he spent the greater part of the day and night in a kind of drunken slumber, produced by the excessive smoking of kiff. Harry Carleton



*In Mid stream.*



undertook to remonstrate with Absalam, and we all went over to the doctor's camp. Here we met the Caid walking with and supported by two boon companions. He moved like some lay figure, mechanically propelled, and was in such a state of sodden stupidity that for some time he failed to recognise us. Suddenly a broad smile suffused his face, and he grasped my hand, shaking it eagerly. He then took out from under his jellab an enormous and highly-decorated revolver with an ivory handle. He then related, with great pride, that since seeing us he had succeeded in killing another man with this revolver, having used the cartridges he had borrowed of me on the journey up, and thus he had achieved the crowning glory of his ambition, namely, to kill one dozen of his fellow-men. He asked me to replenish his stock of cartridges, which were running low, but this I declined to do, feeling a certain moral responsibility over the death of the last victim. We then all adjourned to our tent and had tea. At 7 P.M. we got on the road and travelled for several hours without a halt. There was a full moon, the night was cool, and it was delightful going. Whenever we approached a village we set all the dogs barking, and many of the villagers turned out, fearing the approach of an enemy. I kept Mahommed walking about one hundred yards ahead with his rifle, so as to draw the enemy's fire. We found that our intention of keeping on until the following morning was more difficult an accomplishment than we had originally supposed, for try as we would some member

of the party could not help falling asleep and nearly tumbling off his mule, a feat not quite possible on account of the high-peaked Moorish saddles. Having only had two hours' sleep the night before, and having been unable to sleep at the Warga, owing to the great heat, we were all dead tired. Carleton and myself, however, meant to go on, as we dreaded the sun on the following day, but the unfortunate Ben Jeulin was so done up that he finally refused to go a yard farther. So about 2 A.M. we turned off the highroad to rest for a couple of hours. We lay on the ground and were soon fast asleep, and as nobody woke up until half-past six, we were not on the road again before seven. We reached Chiraifa at 10 A.M., and rested for a couple of hours, then pressed on to Alcazar, where we arrived very worn and extremely hot at Bibi Carleton's house at 5 P.M. Here Ben Jeulin and ourselves parted company, for the former took the road to Tetuan escorted by some Moors, whilst on the following morning we set off for Larache, hoping to find a steamer which would take us to Tangier. At Alcazar Bibi told us what had happened to the unfortunate Spanish doctor Bellinger, who was on his way up to Fez again from Tangier. The *mahalla* of Abdul Aziz was defending Tangier, and the *mahalla* of Moulai el Hafid was continually engaged in skirmishing, and had headquarters at Alcazar. The Spanish doctor reached the Azizist *mahalla*, and was allowed to pass through to continue his journey. But no sooner had he got near the

Hafidists when the Azizists attacked the Hafidists, hoping that the doctor would get killed or injured in the fray, and thus by his death bring discredit on Moulai el Hafid. The same idea occurred to the Hafidists, and they drove him on to the Azizists, hoping he would be killed or injured by them, and thus bring discredit on Abdul Aziz. Thus the unfortunate Bellinger was made to play the unenviable part of a football being kicked from one goal to the other. However, he abandoned his baggage and went into touch, so to speak,—that is to say, he escaped one side, and finally was taken charge of and conducted to Alcazar by some friendly Moors. When Carleton and I reached Larache we found no steamer in the harbour, and none likely to be there for several days. We were then faced with the alternative of continuing our journey by land or of hiring a sailing-boat, but we had had enough of the land and decided on the latter. Carleton knew a broken-down Spanish captain who owned a felucca in which he carried on a small coastal trade. He was laden with corn, and was ready to start for Tangier on the following afternoon, Friday, and said he would be glad to take us. We looked forward to the journey with pleasurable anticipation after the discomfort of the road; but I will frankly admit that half an hour after we had started and crossed the bar I would have given almost everything I possessed to have been once more on the back of my steady old mule. The Atlantic off the coast of Morocco is always rough and the rollers horrible, even



when you are on a large steamer, but in a sailing-boat they are something to be remembered. Larache is only forty-eight miles from Tangier, but once outside, off the coast, the wind died down and we were left to roll about in the oily heat, and actually drifted backwards. We were all worn out by the fatigue of the journey and from lack of proper food, and fell easy victims to sea-sickness. I have never seen a more miserable company, and we one and all swore that nothing would ever induce us to visit Morocco again, or to ever leave our native land. We took twenty-eight hours to go the forty-eight miles, and did not reach Tangier until the Saturday evening at six o'clock.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE DOWNFALL OF ABDUL AZIZ.

I WILL now briefly relate the story of the last—part comic, part tragic—appearance of Moulai Abdul Aziz on the troubled stage of Morocco's history, unless it be that, by one of those strange reversals of the wheel of fate,—not uncommon amongst Orientals,—he should again be called upon to wield the sceptre over the motley millions who take pride in their title of the Faithful, but who have yet to learn the first principles of fidelity towards the Prophet's earthly Khalif their Sultan. But, even if his subjects should summon him, it is doubtful if Abdul Aziz would respond to their call. He has drunk too deeply of the cup of earthly glory to be beguiled by the fickle glamour which encircles the monarch's brow; he is fortunate in having preserved his life and his liberty after the fourteen misspent years of his reign, and he is hardly likely to exchange the comparative comfort of the life of a state pensioner for the eternal worry of that of a Shereefian Sultan. In the seclusion of his enforced retreat in the cool hours of the night, when Tangier is at rest and only the

muezzin's voice calling his former subjects to prayer reaches him from a hundred minarets, he must often reflect on the past, and I am told on these occasions the tears come to his eyes. For their prayers are no longer for him, but for the brother who has usurped his throne, and some little memories of his former greatness still stir him and cause to rise within his breast those vain regrets which all who have missed their flood-tide must sometimes feel, however callous the conscience and however pleasant the material surroundings.

I wished Abdul Aziz to write the story of his last journey for this book himself, and I sent a friend to approach him for this purpose. Shortly afterwards I received the following account of the interview. "I entered the ex-Sultan's presence," wrote Monsieur D——, "and found him but little changed. He seemed calm, happy, and apparently without a care in the world. I gave him your greetings, and he told me he remembered your coming to see him in Rabat, and hoped to see you again the next time you came to Tangier. After we had talked for some time, I ventured, in the most delicate manner, to bring forward the object of my visit. Immediately there came a change in his countenance, which grew more and more unhappy as I proceeded, and I had not finished before he stopped me, saying, 'Please, do not talk any more on that subject; my doctor has forbidden me to talk or even to think about it, therefore I cannot write the account your friend wishes.' Tears came to his eyes, and for some time

he could not speak, so overcome was he with his emotion. But having recovered somewhat, he continued, 'One day I intend to write the account of my reign myself, and am going to have it translated into all the languages of Europe, so that I shall be done justice to, and it will be known that the troubles of my reign were not caused by me, but by the bad men who surrounded me; but still,' he added, 'it may be that I am to blame for trusting them, but I was very young when I came to the throne. However, the time has not yet come, and I am first of all going on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and on that journey I shall write my book.' His face brightened up once more as he talked of his prospective journey, and by the time I left him he had quite regained his old spirits."

It was said of Cicero that "nothing in his life became him like his death"; and although, happily for himself, Abdul Aziz was not called upon to make the supreme atonement of a Charles I. or Louis XVI. for his errors, it can of a truth be said of him that "nothing in his life became him like his fall." In fact, the young Sultan displayed so much courage and energy on his last fateful journey that it has gone far to atone for his former shortcomings, and proves that, with a different environment, the germ of a more useful life might well have been developed. His escapes from death must be accounted almost miraculous, as after the fight his clothes were found pierced by no less than thirty-six bullets. Allowance must be made for the shape of the clothes worn by the Moors, in

which every bullet must necessarily make from six to eight holes; but even then, to have half a dozen bullets through your clothing in the course of one short morning seems to prove that a special providence looks after some of us. In warfare it is generally the unexpected which happens, and surely the two greatest surprises of modern times were Rojestvensky's successful voyage to Japan and Abdul Aziz's journey to Marrackesh.

In both cases it was declared impossible for either to succeed, and few believed Abdul Aziz would ever really leave Rabat and the shelter of the guns of the French warships. Yet, after endless false alarms and infinite delays, he actually set out and marched to within two days of the southern capital before falling into the trap which had been so carefully prepared for him by Moulai el Hafid and the Berber tribesmen. His method of trying to regain his lost throne was peculiar to Morocco, and partakes strongly of the burlesque. Having been summarily forced to leave his own capital by the sudden irruption of his brother and his supporters from the south, Abdul Aziz proposed to regain it by marching on his rival's vacated stronghold in the not unreasonable hope that he would find Moulai el Hafid just as unpopular in Marrackesh as he himself had been in Fez, and thus he would be received with open arms by those who, as he supposed, were groaning under his brother's extortion and misgovernment. Had his expectations been but realised the world would have been amused by the extraordinary spectacle of each of the brothers in the possession of the other's

capital—a burlesque surely worthy of Gilbert and Sullivan at their best. But this delightful scene was not destined to be. Abdul Aziz and his supporters were hopelessly misinformed. They were lured on to destruction by false reports carefully circulated for that purpose, and when they had almost reached the goal of their prospective triumphs, and just when their chances of success seemed at their best, they were completely disillusioned.

The Sultan left the shelter of the walls of Rabat at the end of July, and marched in a leisurely manner through the Chaouia under the protection of the French Army, whose support alone made his expedition feasible. In fact, Moulai el Hafid had good cause to complain of the character of the French neutrality at this time. They provided the Sultan with money to pay his *mahallas*; with field-guns, maxims, arms, and ammunition; and a French military mission, consisting of Commandant Farriau, Captain Mareshal, and several Algerian instructors, accompanied the expedition, with which was also Dr Verdon, the Sultan's faithful physician from Fez, Sergeant Balding, seconded from the 10th Hussars, and a French doctor Fournial. In addition the Sultan had with him his Grand Vizier Si Abdelkerim-ben-Sliman—since dead,—the Grand Vizier Si Bouhili Nokri, and Si Mohamed Abdelwahid, Minister of War. The journey was made in a most leisurely manner, long halts frequently occurring to buy the safe passage of the *mahalla* through hostile tribes, and to secure contingents, most of whom turned traitor at the crucial moment. Thus, when the Sultan crossed the Oum er Rebia

river, and passed out of the Chaouia, consequently losing the moral support of the French Army, he had with him about two thousand of his own regular troops and several thousand tribesmen drawn from the Chaouia, Sraghna, Ben Meskin, Tadla, and Zimran tribes. The whole force was allowed to proceed absolutely unmolested until it crossed the river Tessota and entered the country between Sraghna and Zimran. Here on 19th August a small camp of the enemy was sighted, and at dawn the Sultan led out his motley force to the attack. Instead of finding a few half-hearted supporters of the Pretender, thousands of well-armed Berbers poured out from the olive-groves surrounding the camp, where they lay concealed, supported by contingents of Abdul Aziz's late army from Marrackesh and Fez. The Sultan ordered his tribesmen forward to the attack, he himself advancing slowly with his regular troops, his officers, and the artillery. The tribesmen made a show of attacking, but in reality the rôle they were to play had long since been arranged by Moulai el Hafid, and immediately the hostile army opened fire they broke and fled. The Chaouia and Tadla contingents behaved worst, for they became openly hostile, and rushing back passed the Sultan and his regular troops; they poured in volleys, killing many and throwing the remainder into hopeless confusion. Then quitting the field and hurrying back to his camp, they proceeded to pillage it. Meanwhile the French officers and Algerian instructors, assisted by Sergeant Balding, endeavoured to get the guns

into action, but the shells fell short or failed to explode. However, their brave intervention delayed the advance of Moulai el Hafid's supporters, and gave the Sultan a breathing-space in which to consider his position and that of his immediate retinue. Abdul Aziz behaved with great courage. He seized a rifle and fired it continuously, riding through the ranks, and endeavouring by his personal example to rally the regular troops. But the latter were too demoralised, and fled in dire confusion, leaving the Sultan, his Ministers, the French officers, Dr Verdon, and Sergeant Balding alone on the battlefield, if it can be called such.

They in turn had no course but to fly, and after an hour's ride once more regained the camp which they had left full of hope at daybreak. But the camp was even more insecure than the open country—in fact, the scene there baffles description, for although the followers of Moulai el Hafid did not follow up their victory immediately, never the custom of the Moors, they left the completion of the *débâcle* in the able hands of the Chaouia and Tadla contingents. A regular battle raged round the Sultan's great circular tent between the treacherous Chaouia and the Sraghna contingents, who alone remained faithful to their master in the midst of his misfortunes. Bullets were flying in all directions. The Minister of War received one in the leg—probably the first recorded instance of a Minister of War sharing the sufferings of those whom he sends to victory or destruction. Moulai Yousef, the Sultan's brother, was wounded; the Sultan himself was found with no less than thirty-



six bullet-holes in his flowing robes, and an Algerian instructor was killed. In the midst of this frightful tumult Abdul Aziz alone amongst the Moors preserved his serenity, and maintained to the end the dignity befitting a monarch in misfortune. He rode about the camp encouraging his soldiers and endeavouring to rally them, but his efforts were useless, for all could see the day was lost, and all wished for a share in the spoils. Regulars and irregulars devoted themselves to looting their master's baggage, and to this pre-occupation — so characteristic of the marauding tendencies of the Moorish people — he probably owes his escape and his life. The defeat became a *sauve qui peut*. The Sultan, seeing all was lost, fled across the river Tessota, accompanied by about a hundred followers, who alone remained faithful out of the thousands who acknowledged him as their chief a few hours before. After a ten hours' ride in the blazing summer heat, during which time the party was fired on from every village and hill and olive-grove, they succeeded in crossing the Oum er Rebia river, and once more entered the territory of the Chaouia and the protection of the French. The Sultan was greatly assisted in his escape by the gallantry of Sergeant Balding, Captain Mareshal, and Lieutenant Bel Kaid, who continued to work the maxims up to the last minute and thus covered his retreat, only saving themselves when the Sultan's safety was assured. Before quitting the field they flung the breech-blocks into the river and rendered the guns in-

operative. Abdul Aziz was singularly fortunate in his escape, for the great *mahalla* which left Fez on 10th August under the command of the Glaui and Si-Aissa-ben-Omar should have passed between him and the Oum er Rebia river, thus cutting off his retreat to the Chaouia. However, the *mahalla* was a day late, the defeat of Abdul Aziz came somewhat soon, or was more easily accomplished than was expected, and the unfortunate Sultan was able to reach Settât, where he placed himself under the protection of the French who had marched out to meet him. All the Europeans also succeeded in making good their escape, although they had almost miraculous adventures and vicissitudes which must have proved fatal in any other country except Morocco.

Thus ended the reign of Moulaï Abdul Aziz. His downfall was assured from the moment he left Fez. His expedition to Marrackesh was a hollow farce, which he himself must have known could only end in disaster; but he played the game to the end, and had he displayed one half the courage and energy during his reign he might still be on the throne. The campaign worked out exactly as Moulaï el Hafid had arranged, except for the failure to capture Abdul Aziz. From the first he was assured of the co-operation of the Chaouia and Tadla contingents, and their disaffection threw the Sultan's regular troops into confusion. The rest was easy. The Berber tribesmen had gathered in overwhelming force to oppose his passage through the mountains, and with the

Glaui closing in behind Abdul Aziz was caught in a trap from which there could be no possible escape from overwhelming defeat. Peace to him,—his troubled reign is at an end; may he long live to enjoy the pleasures of a life set free from the cares of State.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## MOROCCO AT PEACE.

THE rout of Marrackesh took place on the day I arrived back in England. I hoped that the defeat and final overthrow of Abdul Aziz would add greatly to my chances of being able to raise a loan for Moulai el Hafid, and thus make good the concession. But I found the difficulties insurmountable. The truth of the situation in Morocco was not understood in England. There was a great and natural mistrust of the stability of any government, and it was generally believed that Moulai el Hafid would go the way of his brother, after a brief and inglorious reign. I soon found it would be impossible to raise any such sum as £300,000, and that the only chance of raising a third of this sum would be by making the matter an international one, and getting the capitalists of all the leading Powers to subscribe a portion. The Act of Algeciras was also an obstacle, because many considered the Sultan was precluded from granting any concession. But the wording of the Act is indefinite and open to various interpretations, and in the opinion of several international

lawyers of repute Hafid had a perfect right to dispose of the mines of his country at his own free will, and therefore the concession was perfectly valid. But the mistrust of Morocco, and the resulting feeling of insecurity, were the main obstacles to success. We felt that the active support of the Foreign Office was essential, and it was decided to lay the concession before them. The reply of the Foreign Office was cautious but unfavourable. They wisely refused to give any decision as to the validity of the concession under the Act of Algeciras, but they declared they could not support it because under the Act of the year 1856 the Marzhen had undertaken to abolish all monopolies throughout the Shereefian empire. This decision therefore necessitated a complete reconstruction of our plans, for if we paid over the money under these circumstances, we did it at our own risk, and without the support of our Government. We could now abandon the whole enterprise, or else endeavour to get a smaller concession which would not form a monopoly, and which could receive the support of the Government. Moulai el Hafid had been so friendly that it seemed a mistake not to take advantage of the opportunity, and it was decided that I should again go to Fez and endeavour to obtain the necessary modifications. I cannot say I was particularly enthusiastic about making the journey a second time, for I was not at all sure how Moulai el Hafid would receive me if I returned without a portion at least of the cash he so eagerly awaited. We decided to try and obtain a concession in the

north-east corner of the country, which would have the advantage of being near the sea-shore and close to the ports. Two mining engineers, Messrs J. H. Dewhurst and De Mole, accompanied me to report on the prospects of the country, and to help me with the negotiations. Harry Carleton was sent on ahead to warn the Sultan that it had been impossible, owing to the opposition of the Powers and of our own Foreign Office, to carry out the original agreement, and to say that we were on our way to start fresh negotiations.

Thus, after a brief stay of four weeks in England, we all sailed for Tangier, and in the early part of October were once more on the high-road to Fez. I found the situation in Morocco much changed. Abdul Aziz was still at Casa Blanca amusing himself in examining French armaments, but had abandoned all idea of regaining his throne. He only awaited the efforts of the Powers to secure him a suitable pension and a safe retreat before finally abdicating. Moulai el Hafid had not yet been recognised by the Powers, with the single exception of Germany, which had stolen a march on her rivals by sending Dr Vassel to Fez, and thus semi-officially confirming her support of the new dynasty. This action on the part of Germany aroused much excitement and mistrust in France, for it appeared, at first sight, to herald a continuation of an aggressive German policy in Morocco, and thus challenge the special rights and interests which France claimed to possess. But, in my opinion, the action of Germany was perfectly natural and correct, as long as the right of the

Moors to choose their own Sultan was recognised by Europe. By this time the whole of Morocco, with the single exception of the town of Casa Blanca, in the possession of the French, had declared for Moulai el Hafid, and it therefore became the bounden duty of Europe to put an end to the state of anarchy and unrest which was so disastrously affecting trade, by also acknowledging the new Sultan. But the French, meekly followed by England and the other Powers, thought differently. France did not want to acknowledge Hafid until he had given his assent to the Act of Algeciras and to the other proposals put forward by the French Government. But Hafid had already promised to abide by the Act of Algeciras, to make provision for his brother's future, and to acknowledge his debts. In truth, French policy had sustained such a check by the defeat of Abdul Aziz, that if only Germany had been sincere in her pretensions to preserve the independence of Morocco she might have acquired unlimited influence. France, in order to regain her fallen prestige, did not wish to surrender too quickly to her late opponent. She wanted time to make her power felt, so as to prove to Hafid that without her assistance he could not hope to remain on the throne. But of the effects and result of the French and German tactics at Fez during these months I shall have occasion to speak later.

My journey to Fez on this occasion was made under very different circumstances to that of three months previously. The road from Tangier to the

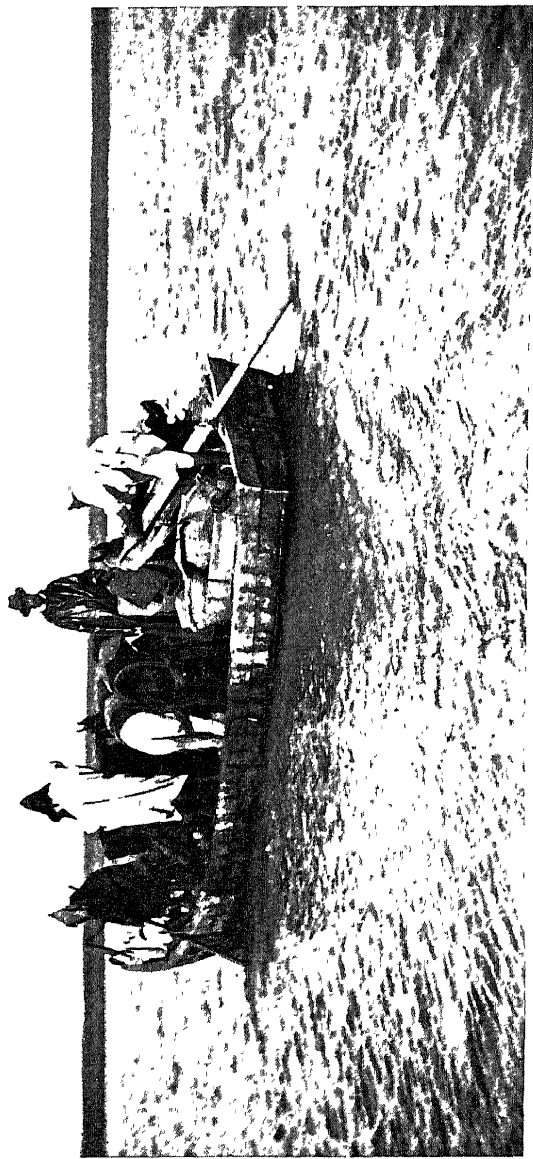
capital was now open, and Europeans were hurrying back to resume their ordinary vocations without fear of molestation from hostile tribes or brigands. At Tangier we fitted out a caravan of twenty mules to carry our baggage and our servants, for there was no need to travel in disguise and discomfort. I engaged an excellent cook, and had my old friend Aron Bensimhon, who had been with me at Casa Blanca, to act as interpreter. The authorities put no obstacles in our way, and we started from Tangier, going first to Alcazar, where we spent a night with my old friend Bibi Carleton.

Morocco is the land of travel and romance, and now that the storm-clouds have temporarily rolled away, under the more settled sway of Moulai el Hafid, the interior is again becoming accessible to the voyager. The villages on the track leading from Tangier to Fez are enjoying a trade boom, which is very welcome after the two lean years following the exit of Abdul Aziz from Fez and the arrival of Moulai el Hafid. Now that the tide has turned, ministers, military missions, traders, and sightseers are pouring to the capital to make treaties, drill armies, and to do business with the new Sultan. This stream of travellers means increased prosperity to the country people, for the perquisites arising from the nightly camps and mid-day halts are considerable. At each resting-place a lively trade is done in sheep, chickens, eggs, bread, and barley, and during the night a number of guards, for a small pecuniary consideration, hover round the outskirts of the camp to



protect the weary slumberer from the imaginary dangers which surround him.

When the weather is fine and the roads in good condition, what can be more pleasant than a journey in the land of the Moors? The climate during the autumn and spring is perfect. The nights are cold, and you may find ice on the water in the early morning, but directly the sun appears the warmth is like that of a beautiful September day in England. The sky is never overcast by clouds, except when the rain is about to fall, and the atmosphere is one of a wonderful bluish transparency. I find something in the atmosphere of Morocco which I have not found in other countries,—something of freedom which is exhilarating to the mind and to the body. I believe it is due to the fact that you are so absolutely dependent on yourself. There are none of the so-called conveniences and comforts of civilisation. There are no time-tables to be consulted, no arbitrary hours of departure or arrival, no right of road or speed limits to be observed. There are no bridges to the rivers, no taverns or rest-houses at which you can dine or stop for the night; no laws to be obeyed, and, if there were, no authorities to carry them into effect. There is no one to protect you in case of danger, and you are entirely dependent on yourself for your food, your lodging, and safe-conduct. Thus you can make your own laws to govern your daily life and the lives of those who accompany you. You are in supreme authority, for far in the interior there is no questioning and no redress. Each tribe through which you pass may regard



*The Ferry in Mid-stream.*



you with different feelings, and therefore you must make friends with each separately, and change your conduct to meet each individual case. There is no race more peaceful and hospitable than the Arabs, once they know you. Every Moor you meet on the road stops to salute you, and to ask the usual questions: "Where are you from?" "Where are you going?" "What is your country?" "What is your business?" Once these are answered to his satisfaction, the stranger will become a friend and often accompany you for some distance on the road. Then your servants, horses, and mules, with their many vagaries, are a constant source of study. Mules are amongst the most intelligent of animals, and they regulate their lives and their conduct in a manner that is almost human. The mule never grumbles or protests. If asked to do a journey of twenty miles it will do it; if asked to go fifty, the mule will go the fifty without a halt with superb determination. On arriving in camp each mule stands quietly still until the load is lifted from its back. Then they roll, and lie down to have a nap before dinner. If the hour is passed by a few minutes, they demand their corn with plaintive cries. All who are attached to travel and who like a life in the open air under the bluest of skies, in the most agreeable of climates, and in a company of chivalrous and romantic people, should travel in Morocco.

The first journey should be from Tangier to Fez. Fez is a city of such historical interest, its citizens are so exclusive and proud of their origin, and the social life of the capital is so typical of all that

is best and most refined in Arab life and culture, that a visit to the capital is essential to a proper understanding and appreciation of the feeling of the mass of the Moors of to-day towards the threatened break-up of the Moorish empire. But I would advise all who are thinking of making the journey to Fez to stop on their way through Spain and visit Cordoba, so as to obtain a first-hand impression of the former glories of the ancient capital of Andalusia. The great Mosque of Cordoba, in the centre of which has been built a Roman Catholic cathedral; the old bridge of Abd-er-Rahman still spanning the Guadalquivir; the four old Moorish mills in mid-stream, two of which are still working; the only remaining Arab street, and the ruins of the Palace of Alcazar, form a sad, if instructive, comparison between the former splendours of Arab dominion and the decay which has now overwhelmed the race. The Moors of Fez are the descendants of the theologians who were expelled from Cordoba during the reign of the Sultan Hakam, after the great revolt in the year 808. They disliked the gay and sociable life led by Hakam, and desired a return to the strict paths of Mohammedan asceticism. The theologians of Cordoba who rebelled against Hakam and the tyranny of the Mutes were mostly of Iberian, not Arab origin, for many of the Spaniards eagerly embraced Islam and became its most vehement disciples and defenders. The rebellion failed, and they were bundled out of Andalusia across the Straits into Morocco. The first Moulai Edriss had just commenced to build

Fez, and he was pleased to find a quarter in his new city for the eight thousand refugees who had fled from Cordoba, and thus many of the Moors of Fez are really of Iberian origin. The theologians expelled from Cordoba have transmitted the same characteristics to their descendants, and down through thirteen centuries the strict observance of their religion has been the dominating factor of life at the capital. The people of Fez are still, as they were in the days of Hakam, the most bigoted and fanatical of all the various tribes and races who embrace the Mohammedan religion. The position and importance of the capital brings it of necessity into close relations with the Christian Powers; but nowhere is the Infidel more disliked and his presence more resented than at Fez.

Morocco is the land of mythical fables, of wondrous miracles, of countless saints, and of endless tradition. It is said that some of the old families of Fez still guard the keys of their old homes in Cordoba, which they carried away with them when expelled for their ill-timed rebellion. The rust and decay of thirteen centuries have probably long since disposed of the keys of the houses of Cordoba, but the tradition of a return to the warm sunshine, blue skies, and well-watered plains of Andalusia still survives amongst the citizens of Fez. Therefore, visit Cordoba on your way to Morocco. Examine carefully the wonders of the great mosque, the roof of which was formerly supported by 1293 marble pillars, of which 800 remain; the carvings in marble and stone and the

exquisite workmanship of the mosaics; the great gold chain hanging from the roof; the paintings on stone and the Arab missals with their apparently unfadable colours. These treasures are all that remain of the vast hoards collected together by the mighty Abd-er-Rahman III., but they serve to show the heights to which Arab art, culture, and learning attained during the palmy days of the power of the kings of Cordoba. I believe the dislike of the majority of the Moors towards the foreigner arises from the memory of the relative positions of the Christian and Mohammedan peoples in the past and the painful reflection of how they stand to-day. The Fasi are brought up in the traditions of the former glories of Fez and Cordoba, and it is hard for them to admit that these cities have sunk into decay, and that the capitals of their once despised rivals have arisen as the champions of civilisation.

The drop from the sublimity of Cordoba to the sordid cosmopolitanism of Tangier comes as a sad surprise, and many, after seeing the coast towns of Morocco, are tempted to go no further. But do not despair; half an hour beyond the outer gate the true Morocco appears in all her varied glory. On your arrival at Tangier a swarm of guides, speaking a few words of almost every known tongue, greet you with insolent familiarity, and offer to conduct you to hotels, cafés, pig-sticking expeditions, or any form of sport you may fancy. Remain as few days as possible in Tangier, for there is nothing of interest to see and very little to do. The inhabitants, of



*A Rest on the Sea-shore.*



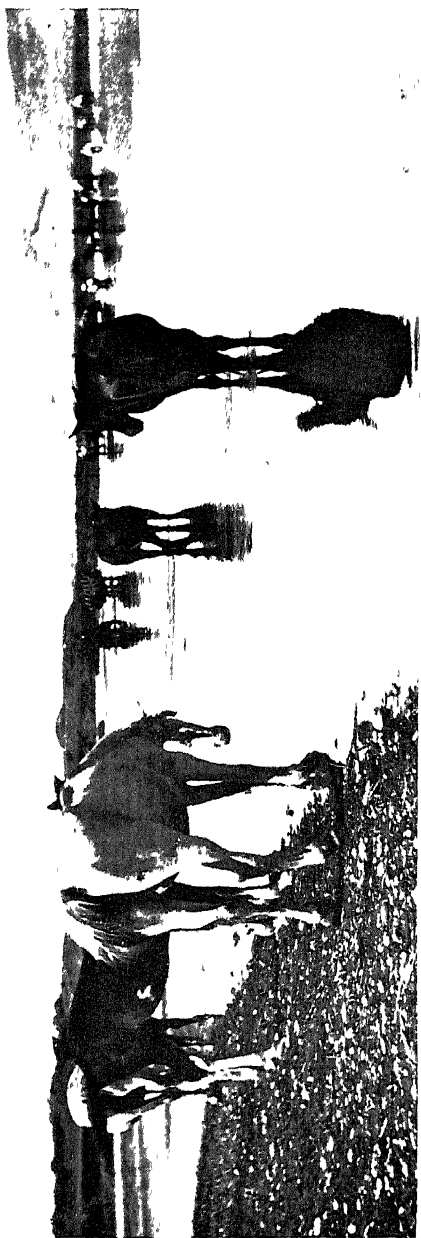


all nationalities, are, with some notable exceptions, a very poor lot. Apparently they never work, but loll about the cafés in the small *soko* (market-place), spending the day and night drinking and gossiping. It is impossible to guard a secret in Tangier, and still harder for the most respectable members of society to safeguard their reputation against calumny and slander. The most extraordinary rumours are constantly afloat, and it is from this source that the majority of the strange reports current about Morocco, and which pass for the truth in Europe, come. It is surprising how quickly Europeans deteriorate after a short residence in Morocco. Children born and bred in the country almost invariably go to pieces, both mentally and morally. They become lazy and dissipated, and seem to acquire all the faults of the Mohammedan character without retaining any of the sterling virtues of that race.

There are two roads from Tangier to Fez, the one passing through Alcazar and the other following the sea-shore, *viâ* Larache. The former is the more direct, and, except during the rainy season, it is usually chosen by the traveller; but the beach road to Larache possesses many attractions, and you are able to spend a night at the old Portuguese settlement of Arzila, which is a model of the fortresses of two centuries ago. No one has ever yet measured accurately the exact distance which separates Tangier from Fez, and I hope the next person to make the journey will take a bicycle wheel with a cyclometer attached to settle the vexed question once and for all.

Roughly, I put the distance at one hundred and eighty-five to one hundred and ninety miles, and it is usual to take from six to eight days on the road, thus limiting the daily march to twenty-five miles, which is quite sufficient if you want to shoot on arriving in camp. The journey can be done comfortably in six days if your animals are not too heavily loaded, and I have ridden from Fez to Larache in two days during the heat of August; but it is an experiment not to be recommended. Except during the months of July, August, and September, the climate of Morocco is temperate and pleasant. The early spring is, however, the best season for the journey, as the tropical rains which are likely to overwhelm you in the late autumn and early winter have ceased. The rivers are serious obstacles during the rainy season, as there are no bridges and no ferries, except close to the coast, and consequently if the fords are impracticable you are likely to be hung up on the banks of a river for a very considerable time. The rivers are wide and shallow, but are liable to rise and fall six to eight feet in twenty-four hours. Your baggage must be carried on mules or horses. There are no regular roads in Morocco, and the tracks are often very difficult to trace and vary constantly, because the tribes have the curious custom of ploughing right over them and sowing their grain thereon. Thus in the summer when the corn is ripe the old route has sometimes entirely disappeared, and it is necessary to strike a new trail. As there are no roads, carts are unknown in the interior.

*At the Ford*





The only wheeled vehicles which ever found their way to Fez were brought there by the late Sultan Abdul Aziz, who succeeded in adding considerably to his unpopularity by the innovation. He introduced bicycles into his harem, motor-cars into the palace-grounds, and an enterprising American presented him with a small state coach for use on ceremonial occasions. This coach has now been incorporated into the regal and religious life of the Sultans of Morocco, and even Hafid sometimes uses it, though he generally prefers to ride a horse and have the coach driven after him. In spite of the variety of its colouring, the brightness of its panels, and its masses of cut glass, the state coach excites derision, for it possesses none of the noble proportions of that of the Lord Mayor, or of those one sees in London on State occasions. On account of the exceeding narrowness of the streets, it has been constructed on a very small scale, and instead of six horses with outriders, one white comely Barb drags it painfully on its bumping way.

Whilst travelling in Morocco it is essential to carry a certain amount of provisions, which cannot be obtained on the road, and also spirits and wine, which are not to be bought for love or money after you have once left the coast. You can buy all the fresh food you require, such as sheep, chickens, bread, butter, and barley at the various villages where you stop for the night; therefore it is useless to load up your mules with a lot of tinned food. Tea, coffee, jam, pickles, and baking-powder are about all you require. A shot-gun is indis-

pensable, as snipe, wild-fowl, ducks, pigeons, and partridges are found in abundance by the wayside and around the various villages,—for the Moors are a race of sportsmen, and they delight to join you in the chase.

The villages have special plots of ground which are put aside for the camps of passers-by. On arrival, the headman of the village greets you politely, and welcomes you in the name of Moulai Edriss, or in that of one of the neighbouring saints. He questions you as to your needs, and produces chickens, eggs, and milk, and offers to sell you a fat sheep. All these articles can be bought at what seems to be a ridiculously low rate, but one which, nevertheless, yields a handsome margin of profit to the village. A full-grown sheep can be bought for five dollars, or about twelve shillings. If you happen to know the village chief, or have stayed with him before, he will send you green tea, mint, sugar, and a coscous from his own table. When the food question has been settled, the headman almost invariably takes you aside to make the following announcement in serious tones: “By Moulai Edriss, I wish to guard you safely during the night, but the country is infested by bad men, who steal horses and mules, and only yesterday there was a fight in the night between two villages over there” (here follows a comprehensive wave of the hand), “and should they hear that you are camped here they will try and steal your horses or mules, and perhaps your baggage. Therefore it is necessary to have many guards round the camp to-night, who will stay up

and watch whilst you sleep. How much will you be willing to pay a-head for their services ?" This poll-tax on guards is a profitable source of income, although the necessity for them is doubtful. However, you had better come to terms at once, because if you do not your host may arrange to carry off a horse or a mule, and will then reproach you on the following morning for not having accepted his advice on the previous night, and will demand what sum you are prepared to pay him for its recovery.



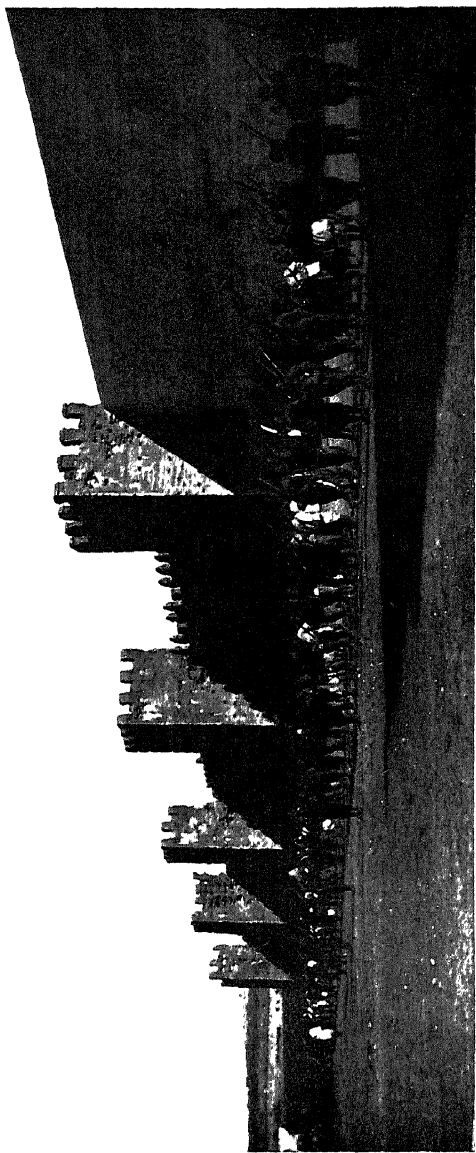
## CHAPTER XXV.

## MOULAI EL HAFID AS SULTAN.

ON our arrival at Fez we installed ourselves in a comfortable little house, no longer as the guests of Moulai el Hafid. For several days we awaited the imperial summons. Harry Carleton brought us unfavourable reports, for the Sultan was reported to have said: "If he brings me the money I will receive him, but if he has not I will never see him again." As I had not got the money there seemed but little prospect of an interview. However, after a few days we were ordered to be at the palace gates at eight o'clock on the following morning. We were well to time, but there was the usual Oriental delay, and it was past one o'clock before we were admitted into Hafid's presence. He received me politely, if somewhat more coldly than was customary, and he asked my two friends, Dewhurst and De Mole, several questions as to why they had come out to Morocco and what they intended to do. We presented the gifts which it is customary to offer on such occasions. These consisted of a sporting rifle, a clock which lit up with electricity, and a mosquito-net which

Hafid had particularly asked me to bring him from England. He was very pleased with the mosquito-net, which was very big and capable of covering a large percentage of his harem. After the usual politenesses had been exchanged we turned to business, and I explained to the Sultan why it had been impossible to raise the money in England. He received my explanations very well, and seemed satisfied with them. I then laid before him our fresh plans, to which he also listened attentively, and when I had finished he remarked, "You were the first to come to me after I reached Fez and offered me support. Therefore I will again enter into negotiations with you, and will order my Ministers to examine your new proposals." With this we parted. But I soon found that it was going to be extremely difficult to obtain a fresh concession once we had failed to carry through the original. Our prestige had suffered greatly, and there were many other Richmonds in the field to oppose us. It had been impossible to keep the matter a secret, and it was known all over Morocco that Moulai el Hafid had granted me a concession on certain terms. Therefore many others also desirous of obtaining mining concessions, which were reputed to be of great value, had come to Fez. There were two parties of Germans, who received the active support of Dr Vassel their Consul; there were Spaniards, supported by the Spanish Consul; there were Frenchmen, working in conjunction with their legation; and the most formidable rival was a great international syndicate which was being formed in

Paris, and which was supposed to be going to obtain the support of all the legations. The active propagator of this was Mr Walter Harris, the Special Correspondent of 'The Times' in Tangier. Thus the Germans, the French, and the Spanish received the active support of their consular representatives, whereas I had to work alone with the assistance of interpreters. One by one the Ministers who had supported me before fell away. They were approached from Tangier, and were offered higher bribes. We, however, did our best, and very nearly succeeded, and had I brought about £10,000 of ready money to Fez all might have been well. But as the days passed, and Hafid's recognition became assured, he no longer felt the want of money. He could not touch the Customs receipts until he was officially recognised, but his own subjects were now more willing to advance him money, and he was able to raise considerable sums from the merchants of Fez. Thus the money we were prepared to offer for the concession became less and less attractive to him. Day by day Dr Vassel, the Spanish Consul, and the French representative poured tales into his ears of the dangers which would accrue if he made over a large portion of the mining rights to particular individuals. The international syndicate, working from Tangier, made attractive offers and held out illusive promises of what might be expected in the near future. Dazzling vistas of untold millions pouring without an effort into his pockets, and into those of his Ministers, blinded and prejudiced Moulai el Hafid. He became haughty



*Awaiting the Arrival of the Sultan on the Parade-ground.*



in his demeanour and daily more distant. Dewhurst and De Mole, tiring of the typical Oriental delay and duplicity, wisely decided to return to England; but I stayed on in the hopes of bringing the deal off, although I had little confidence left. Meanwhile, although our business did not progress, there was plenty of interest to help to pass the time at this semi-barbarous Court. I saw the great ceremony at the end of the fast of Ramadan. The Sultan came out into the open, surrounded by his troops, and there received the homage of all the deputations from the surrounding tribes. It was an imposing and impressive sight. Now that his recognition was merely a matter of time, Hafid began to assume the dignity and etiquette appertaining to his rank and exalted position. It was no longer possible to drop in and see him when and where one wished.

If you desired an audience with the Sultan it became necessary to apply to the Foreign Minister Sidi Abdallah Fasi, who had succeeded Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar. He would order you to be at the gate of Bebel Bouchad, which leads on to the parade-ground, at nine o'clock on the morning of the audience. It would be impossible to find a more unique sight the world over than that which the parade-ground presents during the hours of business and reception from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. The courtyard is about a quarter of a mile square, and is entirely surrounded by high walls, which are pierced by two gates leading to the town, and by three leading into the palace. It is almost impossible to do justice to the picturesqueness of the

scene either by words or by photographs, because all the varied colour touches are missing. The Ministers arrive early, with the secretaries, attendants, and supporters, and sit down on mats on the sunny side of the square. Just inside the gate are collected the horses and mules of themselves and their followers. It is the feudal system which makes life in Morocco so complicated, because each one of the great Caids or Ministers is a little state in himself. They travel everywhere with their squires, attendants, secretaries, and soldiers, and although all are obliged to live in peace at the capital, out in the country there are continual feuds springing up between the rivals. Now that Moulai el Hafid has been acknowledged, you will usually find consuls and some visitors waiting about the courtyard for an audience with the Sultan. Until he appears you pass the time watching the troops at drill, and there is no more picturesque and amusing spectacle than the Moorish Army forming square, breaking into column of companies, or endeavouring to perform some other manœuvre. There are some 3000 men assembled under their Caids, assisted by an English instructor and his interpreter. The troops do not show much zeal until the Sultan appears in person, but squat on the ground listening to the numerous bands practising the opening bars of the few tunes which the musicians acquired during the palmy days of Sir Harry Maclean. The favourites are "The British Grenadiers," "The Cock o' the North," and—by a strange irony—"The Marseillaise." The troops are clad in any garments



*Moorish Troops marching to Parade-ground.*



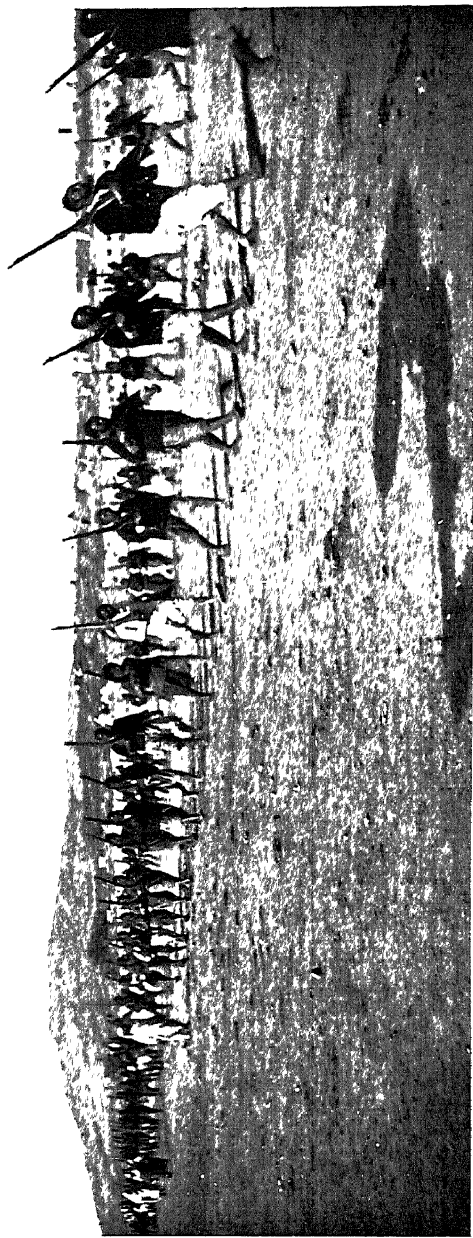


which the wearers have been able to grab from the barracks before coming on parade. There are some in baggy kharki trousers and kharki tunics ; others in kharki trousers and red tunics ; others in red trousers and kharki tunics ; others in green trousers and kharki tunics, or kharki trousers and green tunics ; others in red coats and green trousers, or green coats and red trousers ; others in white trousers and red coats, or red trousers and white coats ; others in white coats and kharki trousers, or white trousers and kharki coats ; others in purple coats and kharki trousers, or purple trousers and kharki coats ; others in red and blue, green and red, yellow and red, or yellow and blue, and so on, until every admixture of colour is exhausted. Some are proud possessors of boots, others only of shoes, others of Moorish slippers, whilst the majority tread the ground shod only with nature's leather. All wear the same head-dress, which is the symbol of the military man as distinct from the layman in Morocco, namely, the red fez without the white rizza. The rifles, bayonets, and swords are even more varied in pattern than the uniforms, and there is one section which, in lieu of better weapons, carries old polo-sticks, souvenirs of the glorious and ever-lamented days of Abdul Aziz, when that game was first introduced into the palace by the late Major Ogilvie.

The Moorish Army is drilled under extreme difficulty, and its efficiency has not been added to by Hafid's unfortunate choice of instructors. One of these gentlemen is an ex-non-commissioned

officer of some Colonial corps ; and the other, who acts as his interpreter, comes from Masagan. He knows naught of military matters, but wears a uniform and carries a sword and struts up and down exceedingly pleased with himself, endeavouring to make his companion's word of command understood by the troops, who gaze in open-mouthed astonishment at the hoarse cries of "Right turn," "Halt," "Stand at ease," "Present arms." Both these gentlemen came up to Fez early and impressed the Sultan with a sense of their military efficiency, and as there was no one there to gainsay them, they were appointed by Hafid, who imagined that by doing so he was pleasing the British Government and sowing the seeds of discord amongst the nations. He now greatly regrets his precipitate action. As the instructors do not understand Arabic and the troops do not understand English, it is impossible for them to drill, and the morning's work consists in marching this disorganised rabble round and round the square to the opening bars of "The British Grenadiers," "The Cock o' the North," and "The Marseillaise." Nevertheless, what the Moorish Army lacks in efficiency it certainly gains in picturesqueness.

Ranged alongside one of the walls of the courtyard is the artillery of the Moorish Army, which consists of some old mountain-guns dating from the time of Moulai Hassan, and a few of a more modern type which have been added since. Almost every morning a semi-comedy is played round these guns. From the waiting crowd near the



*Moorish Troops marching to Parade-ground.*



gate a ragged figure, sometimes only clad in a piece of sackcloth, will dash madly for the guns. He is immediately pursued by the palace attendants, who will try and overtake him or head him off, and if they succeed in catching him before he reaches the guns he is pummelled, kicked, and summarily ejected from the courtyard. But should the fugitive reach the guns before being caught and fling his arms round the muzzle, or seat himself on the carriage, all the *mahazni* (palace attendants) in the Maghzen are powerless to touch him, and he is as safe from molestation as were those who fled to the altars of sanctuary in the Middle Ages. The guns are symbolical of the supreme power of the Sultan, and those who grasp their muzzles are under the Sultan's special protection and cannot be touched. This is how the poor approach the Sultan and present their petitions or ask for the redress of their grievances. They often have difficulty in attracting his attention, so throughout the morning they utter plaintive cries of "Ya Sidi !" "Ya Sidi !" which being interpreted means "Oh, my master !" "Oh, my master !" When these cries reach the ears of Hafid above the din of "The Cock o' the North" and "The British Grenadiers," he at once sends an attendant to inquire the crier's cause. The attendant returns with the answer, and redress is given either by Hafid himself or the case is referred to one of the Ministers. Thus you wile away many a morning waiting for the Sultan to appear in person. His hours are varied, his will is capricious, and he only attends to business

when he feels inclined. Now that he is in undisputed possession of the throne his habits have greatly changed. The Consuls of Germany, France, and Spain grow restless as the hours slip by and the Sultan fails to appear. They smoke innumerable cigarettes and begin to worry the Ministers. Sidi Abdallah Fasi assumes a look of supreme mystery and waves a finger knowingly from side to side. "Patience is a great blessing," he says; "His Majesty still sleeps," or "His Majesty has not left the harem," or "His Majesty is receiving presents." At length there is a burst of hideous music from every one of the combined bands; the troops spring to attention, and rifles, swords, bayonets, and polo-sticks are brought to the present. From the palace gate Moulai el Hafid appears on foot, followed by a swarm of *mahazni*, over whom he towers. He walks with a somewhat rolling gait, after the manner of a blue-jacket ashore, and eyes the bowing, obsequious crowd of courtiers and attendants with a look which seems to imply part wonder and part amusement. His eye then wanders on to the waiting consuls and strangers, who stand bareheaded, but he does not return their salute. Every fine morning Hafid is followed, at an interval of a few paces, by three of the ladies of the harem. They are neither young nor attractive, and it is difficult to see why he so enjoys their society. One of them is a relict of Moulai Hassan, another is a sister of the Glaui, and the third, the youngest of the three, I do not know. They accompany Hafid everywhere, for it is said they help him to forget

the cares of State, an empty treasury, and the aggressions of the French, by retailing to his ready ear stories of the reign of his father Moulai Hassan, and of the strange happenings and revels of Abdul Aziz. When the Sultan descends into the courtyard it is the signal that the business of the day has commenced. He walks towards a small green summer-house, some sixteen feet square, which moves on wheels, so that it can be kept in the sun. Inside is placed a yellow sofa on which Hafid reclines. The Foreign Minister, or any other officials who happen to be present, squat at his feet. If Europeans are going to be received, two or three ordinary cane-backed chairs are produced. Even after he appears in the courtyard Hafid does not always receive visitors or commence to work with his Ministers. If the weather is fine he adjourns with his three lady friends to the top of an old fort from which a glorious view of the surrounding country is obtained, and there they spend two or three pleasant hours, during which it is freely whispered the ladies entertain their lord by telling him of the gossip of the town, and even by some *risqué* stories. During these moments, devoted to repose and pleasure, not even the Ministers dare approach their master. Time means nothing to the Moor, one day is just as good as another, and Hafid takes no heed of the fuming consuls and disappointed visitors who are waiting for interviews. In the middle of the morning cakes and sweet tea are brought from the palace, after which the three ladies return to their quarters, and the Sultan enters the green summer-



house, ready for the day's work. Each interview usually lasts a very long time, for the Moors love to gossip on all sorts of matters totally irrelevant to the subject-matter in hand. Once you are in the Sultan's presence, and if he happens to be in a good humour, you may stay with him for two or three hours, and hear from a distance the muttered oaths of those who are waiting their turn. The conversations often take a very curious form. I remember one between the Foreign Minister, Sidi Abdallah Fasi, and my interpreter, who is in reality a British subject and a Christian, but was believed by the Moors to be a good Mohammedan.

*Sidi Abdallah.* Have you ever tasted pig?

*Interpreter.* No, not to my knowledge; but I may have eaten it by mistake, for the Christians love to try and make us eat pig without our knowing.

*Abdallah.* I wonder what it tastes like: they tell me it is very good.

*Interpreter.* Yes; the Christians are very fond of it.

*Abdallah.* It is a disgusting habit eating such an animal.

*Interpreter.* Yes; but the Christians are disgusting.

*Abdallah.* Is it true you let your wife go out in the streets without her veil?

*Interpreter.* Sometimes I do. In fact, I am obliged to.

*Abdallah.* That is very wrong. I will never allow my wives to go out without their veils.

I quote this to show the form the conversation takes even when you go to the palace on important business. Every conceivable matter is discussed rather than the one for which you have come. Sidi Abdallah, the Foreign Minister, is a polished gentleman, and exceedingly learned in the Koran, and it is his duty to expound the sacred book in the mosques on Fridays. He often preaches in the presence of the Sultan himself, who is also a great authority on the Koran, and loves to cross-examine the members of the Sacred College on intricate questions of law and of dogma.

But all is not sunshine at Fez. There is a darker, more barbaric side to the life which has survived from remote ages. Under the peaceful sway of Abdul Aziz many of the former customs, which seem so barbarous and cruel from the European standpoint, have been abrogated and forgotten. The instruments of torture were cast aside, and the cup of poison which formerly played such an important rôle in State affairs had for many years remained empty. Those who offended under Abdul Aziz went in little danger of their lives. They might spend years in prison or under restraint, but that was about the extent of their punishment. But Moulai el Hafid, cast in a sterner mould than his brother, and determined to rule after the manner of his forefathers, has restored some of the old customs, and has struck terror into his enemies. Ben Sliman, the former Foreign Minister of Abdul Aziz, came to Fez hoping to be restored to favour and to find fresh employ-

ment. One morning he was found dead in his bed. Perhaps he died a natural death, but the Fasi do not believe it, and my interpreter returning from the markets whispered in my ear, "On dit qu'il ait pris un bon café."

Moulai Mohammed, the elder brother of Moulai el Hafid and Moulai Abdul Aziz, revolted against Moulai el Hafid, claiming that his actions were no better than those of his brother, and openly advocated a holy war. He gained many supporters, and caused some alarm at the capital, but then he was captured by a trick and brought to Fez under escort. He arrived at the gates of the palace one Friday morning during the hours of prayers, mounted on a wretched mule, his feet and wrists weighed down with rusty fetters, and covered with the dust and the dirt of his long journey, during which he had been subjected to nothing but insult and discomfort. But in spite of his unhappy plight Moulai Mohammed still maintained a proud and independent demeanour. They might load him with chains, torture him, and cast him into prison, but they could not break the heroic fanatical spirit which rose superior to all material misfortunes. He gazed on his captors and on the silent expectant crowd with contempt and defiance. No compromise was possible with Moulai Mohammed. He preached the holy war, and what is more he would have waged it had success but given him the opportunity. He considered the expulsion of the infidel from Morocco as the highest ideal attainable of the children of the Prophet. After prayers,

he was led before his brother, still in chains. I would have given a great deal to have heard what passed between them. I am sure, however, that it was Moulai Mohammed who did most of the talking, and that he reproached his brother for following in the footsteps of Abdul Aziz. The people of Fez, who sympathised with him, were all agog to know his fate, and when it was announced that he would be kept in confinement in a house in the palace, there were many who smiled and prophesied—recalling the fate of Ben Sliman—that he would soon escape. They were right; Moulai Mohammed's imprisonment did not last long. One day my interpreter came from the markets with the news of his death, and whispered in my ear, "On dit qu'il ait pris un bon café." Perhaps Moulai Mohammed died a natural death, some believe he is still alive, but at any rate we can say of Moulai el Hafid as was said of the first Consul, "The Sultan is so fortunate his enemies all die." Poor Moulai Mohammed, if any one deserves a tear it is you; and of the three brothers you are to be the most admired. You proved yourself a worthy descendant of the Abbasides, and it was men of your stamp who conquered half the world, and spread the word of the Prophet from the Ganges to the Guadalquivir. But you lived a century or two out of your time. It does not do to have too decided political opinions nowadays, and if a man wishes to succeed he must be willing to compromise. What a life was yours! Your father passed you over for the succession; your brother, Abdul Aziz,

kept you in prison for fourteen weary years. Then came your few weeks of freedom and of rebellion, and now you have been gathered to your forefathers by a cup of arsenic. But if the Prophet only keeps his word, you will have a higher place, and be held in more esteem, than either of the brothers who have so ill-used you.

Of the followers of Moulai Mohammed some were imprisoned and others put to the torture. Sad was the fate of a local preacher, who had the audacity and indiscretion to write in his favour. One fine day as the troops were being drilled, and the bands were playing, and the consuls and visitors were awaiting their audiences, the propagandist was brought up for trial and for punishment. Hafid, wishing to share the responsibility with the proper authorities, handed him over to the Ouelama or Sacred College, who, being very much afraid of the Sultan, were not long in passing judgment. The unfortunate man was sentenced to have the palms of his hands cut open, filled with salt, and his clenched fists sewn up in leather gloves, so that as the wounds healed they would grow together. The sentence was carried out in full view of all in the courtyard, which that day presented a unique study of the whole machinery of state in full working order. The Sultan sits cross-legged on a yellow sofa in his green summer-house; around him are ranged the judges who had pronounced sentence; on the ground, at the foot of the steps of the summer-house, lies the journalist who had been found guilty; kneeling over the prostrate form is the

executioner with his knife; an assistant stands ready with his bag of salt, and close at hand is one of the most respected saddlers in Fez, carrying a piece of leather, a needle and thread, ready to sew up the offending hands. Cries of "Ya Sidi," "Ya Sidi," came from the miserable wretches grasping the cannon, who are trying to attract the Sultan's attention. Seated up against the wall are the Ministers, some chatting, some writing, others peacefully asleep; and near them are the consuls and visitors, one of the latter carrying a silver tea-service to present to the Sultan. The troops fill the square, and in half a dozen places little groups of men gathered round a prostrate form are busy administering the morning's floggings. Mules and horses gallop wildly about the square, breaking the ranks. High above the sound of the floggings, the cries of the victims, and the shouts of "Ya Sidi," "Ya Sidi," there sounds incessantly the discordant opening bars of "The British Grenadiers," "The Cock o' the North," and "The Marseillaise." Thus you see at one and the same time, the Monarch on his throne (or rather sofa), the Supreme Court administering justice, the executioners carrying out sentence, the army being drilled and flogged, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the Minister for War, with their officers, either asleep or at work, and the Diplomatic Corps awaiting the Imperial pleasure.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## A LAST AUDIENCE.

At length, after a stay of three months at Fez, I saw it would be futile to remain longer, and I applied to Hafid for a farewell audience. When he heard that I really intended to leave he sent a message through his Foreign Minister begging me to remain, as he desired to enter into a fresh arrangement with me. I knew this was merely to make a further delay, which all Orientals love so much, and I replied that it was quite impossible, and fixed a day for my departure. The Foreign Minister, my friend Si Abdallah Fasi, then sent for me and begged me earnestly to remain for just a few days longer, and I said I would. He told me to be at the Palace at eight on the following morning; but we were not destined to see the Sultan on that occasion, nor for several days afterwards. We waited patiently on for several mornings, only to be informed about three o'clock in the afternoon that His Majesty had retired to his harem and would do no more business that day. At length, my patience being exhausted, I prepared to leave Fez, but on the very day I

had fixed for my departure I was summoned to the Palace. It was a beautiful evening, and Moulai el Hafid was reclining on his favourite sofa at the top of an old fort, from which he could obtain a superb view of Fez and of the surrounding country. The sun was just setting in a ball of fire, and the rays lighted upon and lit up the snow-capped Atlas fifty miles away, and made the green roofs of the mosques and minarets sparkle in the sun. Hafid was weary after a long day of audiences, and seemed to me to be a little sad and melancholy. He received me affably, and at once proceeded to explain how sorry he was not to be able to grant the fresh concession we had asked for. He went into many details, and explained how his life was made a burden by the jealousies of the French, Germans, and Spanish. "They tell me I will not be recognised if I grant you this concession for the northern portion of my country, and even if I do so in spite of them I am afraid it will not be allowed to stand by the Powers. At present," Hafid continued, "I shall not grant a concession to any one, and thus save myself from these continual troubles and disputes." I begged His Majesty not to consider the matter, and that, as far as I was concerned, I did not care about the concession, but would always look back with pleasure on the many happy days I had spent in his society. We then talked for a long time on the political situation. The Sultan seemed to have a thorough grasp of the many pitfalls and difficulties which lay across his path, and was fully alive to the somewhat precarious nature of his



tenure of the throne. Then I wished His Majesty a long life and prosperous reign, and bade him farewell. It was with very genuine regret that I left the presence of this remarkable man, whose fortunes I had followed from the moment when he set up his standard at Morocco City in August 1907. I was on intimate terms with Hafid at a time when he was not on the throne officially, before he had acquired the deportment and reserve of a monarch, and whilst it was possible to form a fair estimate of his character.

No one has suffered more from misrepresentation than the new Sultan himself. There has been a systematic attempt to blacken his personal character, and to make him appear as a relentless savage determined to throw back Morocco into a state of barbarism from which it was supposed to have emerged under the weak sway of Abdul Aziz and his corrupt gang of advisers, who filled their own pockets at the expense of the State. He has also been denounced as the enemy of the Christian, who will close his country to foreign trade. These pictures of him are utterly false and devoid of foundation, and are contradicted by all who know the man. Hafid possesses that most valuable of all traits in a monarch, a personality. Even those who are hostile to his interests admit the charm of his manner and the influence he exercises over them. The Jews, who naturally liked the easy sway of Abdul Aziz, have nothing but good to say of his successor, for they realise they will be safer under the rule of a strong sultan who may find it necessary to curtail some of the exceptional privi-

leges granted them by Abdul Aziz, but who is also able to protect them from a fanatical population. Hafid is possessed with energy, determination, and high courage, which qualities he displayed in a marked manner in the early stages of his rebellion, when he and his supporters frequently lived for months in the open. Yet he was never downhearted, even when the game seemed to be going against him. On his arrival at Fez he set to work in a business-like manner to establish an administration and to organise his *mahallas* to inflict the final blow on his brother, should he venture from the Chaouia. Hafid was most anxious to go south himself with the great *mahalla* which left Fez on August 8, under the command of his two most trusted lieutenants, the Glaui and Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, but it was pointed out to him that his presence was needed at the capital. He therefore remained with only a small escort amidst a population which was reported in Europe to be ready to rise at any moment and proclaim Abdul Aziz. Hafid takes no credit to himself for what he has accomplished, but attributes his success to the protection of the Prophet, who has chosen him to be the instrument by which Morocco may be saved from disruption and foreign control. He never speaks ill of Abdul Aziz, merely calling him "That misguided child who has fallen into bad hands."

I have spent many hours with Hafid, and I have heard him talk on a great variety of subjects. Although, as is only natural considering the life he has led, his education and experience, from a European standpoint, are limited, he has a great power

of assimilating knowledge. Dr Holtzmann, his faithful German physician, who has known him for years, thus described his master to me. "I have never met a man better able to understand any subject laid before him than Hafid. He quickly grasps essential points, and rejects that which is unnecessary. He has a prodigious memory, recollecting individuals and events in a manner that astonishes me. Hafid," Dr Holtzmann went on to say, "is a man of extreme simplicity of character, who despises luxury and laughs at the baubles which delighted the heart of his brother. He has not added a single slave to his household or saved a single sixpence since his proclamation." This statement was confirmed by all that I saw. Hafid's remark to a certain European when showing him the dolls, clocks, sewing-machines, violins, and other toys left behind by Abdul Aziz, will surely live. "I have been accused," he said, "by Caid Maclean and others of destroying the evidences of civilisation left behind by my brother. Look how untrue is this accusation. I have given orders that they shall be preserved for ever, so that a thousand years from now the children of the sultans may see them and be told how we nearly lost an empire."

Moulai el Hafid is above all else a patriot. He loves his country, and he is anxious to restore its prestige and to safeguard its independence. His strength lies in the Nationalist party, who, looking for a chief, rallied to his standard and placed him on the throne. Isolation from the foreigner and the closing of the country to European trade are no planks in his platform. He stands for an

independent Morocco, having relations with all the Powers on terms of equality. He asks for a fair trial. His difficulties are immense, but he knows well that if he fails Morocco will pass into the limbo of European Dependencies.

On the evening that I said good-bye to Hafid the Foreign Minister sent for me, and asked me to remain at Fez at the Sultan's special request. I replied that this was impossible, and announced my intention of leaving on the following morning. The Minister pressed me, but I refused. Si Abdallah then said, "Well, come here early in the morning before you leave, for the Sultan wants to make you a fresh proposition." At eight on the following morning Monsieur Dahdah, my interpreter, and myself went to the Foreign Minister's house. He was already up, and greeted me in the most courteous manner, and proceeded to deliver the Sultan's message. "His Majesty," he said, "greatly regrets his inability to grant you the concession you desire, for owing to the hostility of the other Powers it is impossible for him to do so; but in order to prove how well disposed he is towards you, he will grant you mining rights over any particular stretch of territory you like to specify. His Majesty knows it is impossible for you to do so offhand, and he therefore authorises me to negotiate with you from Tangier. When you arrive there you can decide on what sites you desire to have, and His Majesty will immediately grant them."

I thanked Fasi, bade him farewell, and half an hour later was once more on the highroad to Tangier.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE CAMPAIGN IN THE RIFF.

ON August 3, 1909, I again found myself *en route* for Morocco. During the month of July hostilities suddenly broke out between the Spanish garrison occupying Melilla and the Riff tribesmen, the savage unconquered race who dwell amongst the mountains of Guelaia Peninsula.

I sailed on board the German steamer for Gibraltar, and the first person I met on board was my old friend Frederick Villiers, with whom I had gone through the siege of Port Arthur. Increasing years have in nowise diminished his military ardour, and he was also on his way to the Spanish army. At Gibraltar I was met by the faithful Aron Bensimhon, who had been my interpreter both at Casa Blanca and during my stay at Fez. He at once expressed his readiness to act in the same capacity again, and without loss of time we began to collect equipments necessary for the campaign. He warned me that it was impossible to buy a horse for love or money at Melilla, as the Spanish army had bought up every animal for transport. We therefore set to

work to find a suitable animal in the town. It is a very difficult business to buy a good horse at short notice when everybody knows you have got to start early the next morning, and therefore cannot be too particular as to quality or price. But on this occasion I was singularly fortunate, and acquired a splendid Algerian barb stallion for the sum of twenty-nine pounds. He was six years old, very strong and fast, and could jump exceedingly well. In fact, he turned out the best animal I ever owned in any campaign, and on my return to England it was very sad to have to part with him; but he had acquired such an excellent reputation for speed, endurance, and docility amongst the Spanish officers, that I had no difficulty in selling him for a good price. He became the property of Prince Raniero de Bourbon of the Princessa Hussars, who intended to take him back to Spain on the conclusion of the campaign. This horse possessed some peculiarities that I have never seen in any other. He never would stay awake unless he was actually on the move, and no sooner did you dismount, even for a minute, than he would lie down, close his eyes, and fall sound asleep. Nor would he stand up unless obliged to, and loved to stretch himself at full length and fall asleep, with guns going off all around him and bullets flying about. Nothing could disturb the peaceful equanimity of his temperament, and he would allow you to use his neck as a pillow at any time without making the least effort to rise. The only way in which you could keep him on his feet when halted was to sit

up against his forelegs. He would put these close together and let you rest your full weight on them without budging an inch. Thus I could obtain shelter from the sun, and hardly realised what I was leaning against, except for an occasional perfectly friendly nibble at the back of one's head. He was intensely fond of sweets, bread, and cheese, and would eat German Saucisson de Gourmets (a delicious product of Amuina Frères), if given to him. I have sometimes known him take a little Spanish wine when he was particularly hot and thirsty, and there was no water. At times he displayed a considerable amount of devil. This was when cantered or raced with other horses. He would then do his best to buck you off, and savagely attacked any other animal which came near him. A more comfortable animal to ride on a long day's outing I have never known, and I have always regretted since not having been able to bring him back to England.

Frederick Villiers, myself, and Aron Bensimhon arranged to cross over on the following morning at 6 A.M. from Gibraltar for Algeciras, and from there to take the train to Malaga. I sent my horse and our heavy luggage on by sea direct from Gibraltar in a small coasting steamer, on which there was no accommodation for passengers. That night I was dining at the Club, when I suddenly ran across Captain Pakenham, whom I had not seen since the Russo-Japanese War, where, as our Naval Attaché, he enjoyed the unique experience of witnessing all the great naval engagements from Admiral Togo's flagship, the *Mikassa*. At

6 A.M. we left for Algeciras, and after a long dreary railway journey reached Malaga at two. There was no boat leaving for Melilla that day, so we took up our quarters at the Grand Hotel, and went sight-seeing. There was great excitement in the town over the war, for most of the wounded had passed through Malaga on their way home, and transports, troops, and horses were continually leaving for the Moroccan Coast. Malaga has a fine cathedral containing some splendid pictures by almost all the great masters. I also visited the bull-ring; but this was deserted, and there had been no bull-fights since the disaster to General Pintos.

On the following day, August 9th, we boarded a steamer at 6 P.M., which was due to reach Melilla on the following morning. At the quay there was a great scene of bustle and animation before the departure of our transport. Many Spanish officers embarked on her, and also a small body of troops and a large quantity of stores. I also met on board several Spanish correspondents, the most notable of whom was M. Romero, who owns a paper in Madrid, and who was going out to act as the special correspondent of 'The Daily Telegraph.' At 5 A.M. I was aroused by the sound of guns booming, and on going on deck I found we were quite close to Melilla. The mountains at first sight seemed to approach almost to the sea-shore, and from the forts which surround the town the guns were shelling Mount Gurugu. We could see the shells bursting on the hillsides, but I quite failed to discover any enemy, though no doubt



many of them were concealed amongst the rocks and boulders. Melilla has no regular harbour, but merely consists of an open roadstead, in no wise protected from the sudden gales of the Mediterranean ; and these periodically, but more especially in the winter, frequently render communication with the shore impossible. At 8 A.M. we landed, and the first person I met was my old friend Colonel Lewis, my former companion at Casa Blanca, who, happening to be on a visit to Morocco at the time of the outbreak of hostilities, hastened to Melilla to act as a correspondent of 'The Times.' He had already been there some ten days, and quickly put me in touch with the situation. My first step on landing, after having installed myself at a miserable little hotel kept by a Frenchwoman, Madame Torres, but boasting the proud title of Hôtel de France, was to visit the Headquarters and to secure a pass with the necessary permission to follow the operations. The same morning I waited on General Marina accompanied by Colonel Lewis. We were most cordially received by the Spanish Commander-in-Chief, who is a short thick-set man approaching sixty years of age. He has greyish hair, a greyish beard, keen eyes, and a strong jaw, and in appearance somewhat resembles General Grant. His headquarters were situated in the house which he occupied as Commander-in-Chief and Governor of Melilla. He received me most cordially, expressed his pleasure at having an Englishman with him, and said he would do everything to facilitate my work. He introduced me to the



*General Marina.*



officers of his staff, and my relations with them always remained on the most friendly footing, especially with his two aides-de-camp, Captains Bascaran and Cavanillos. General Marina speaks French, and told me that he was not able to say when he would be ready to take the offensive, but he would have me notified in due course, so that I might make all necessary preparation. Afterwards I was given a pass, which authorised me to go anywhere I liked, and to follow the troops in the field, with the single exception that I must not enter any of the permanent fortifications which encircle the town. On the following day Captain Granville Fortescue of the United States Army, and formerly aide-de-camp to President Roosevelt, arrived at Melilla. I had telegraphed to him to join me there. We had formerly been together throughout the siege of Port Arthur, where he acted as the United States Military Attaché. Thus, of the four English correspondents present at Melilla, three—viz., Frederick Villiers, Fortescue, and myself—had been together in the Russo-Japanese War. We soon found out that far from arriving late on the scene, we had reached Melilla at an unnecessarily early date, and that there was no chance of a Spanish advance for some weeks. The recent reverses had had such a deplorable effect in Spain that any further disaster might have ended the monarchy, and General Marina had received implicit instructions not to make any forward movement until he was sure of having sufficient men and guns to make his success certain.

However, there was enough movement to make the time pass quickly while waiting for the advance. Accompanied by Colonel Lewis, I visited in turn all the Spanish posts and camps, and it will not be out of place at this point to give a short description of the fortress, and of the causes which led to the outbreak of hostilities. Some four hundred years ago the Spanish Duke of Modena placed Melilla on a little rocky promontory jutting out into the Mediterranean from the east side of the peninsula, which ends at Cape Tres Forcas, and about nine miles from that point. The old citadel, which is now called the Plaza, remains practically as it was built by the Duke of Modena. It is a tiny little fortress town, of about 1000 yards perimeter; and in it to this day are the Governor's house and offices, cathedral, hospital, theatre, officers' casino, and shops enough to supply the wants of as many as can live in it. That the streets are mere narrow alleys goes without saying, but there is a sufficiently imposing square facing Government House, up to which the covered way leads from the quay, and a smaller square at the salient angle of the citadel on which the cathedral stands, whence a fine sweeping view can be had over the sea. This fortress is built on a rock, partly detached from the head of a spur which drops abruptly into the sea on the west, and on the east dominates the Rio de Oro just before it flows into the sea 1000 yards from the Plaza. A little later defensive works were constructed along the upper levels of the main spur

commanding approaches by sea from the direction of Tres Forcas, and by land from the valley of the Rio de Oro. So Melilla remained a *place forte* against the armament of old days, until about twenty years ago, when a rectangular annexe was built eastward about 500 yards along the sea, enclosed by defensive barracks, with a sea-wall and frontage. This included a good market and several small streets, in which are still the principal business houses of the settlement. At the same time there were constructed an outer circle of detached forts, some round, some octagonal, and of various trace, running almost up to the Spanish border-line. Between these forts and the outer enceinte of Melilla in the last four years has arisen a new town. Up the valley of the Rio de Oro a pretty and extensive public garden has been made, and round it hotels, modern shops, and a fair residential quarter is now found, while spacious barracks have been built to the south of all. The detached forts cover the approaches of the new town. The principal forts on the right bank of the Rio de Oro are Camillos, a circular fort at three-quarters of a mile from the Plaza, and a mile and a half farther south, Purissima Concepcion. Then crossing the river to its left bank are forts Reina Regente, Cambrerizas Bajas, and Cambrerizas Altas; and the most advanced and the largest work is fort Rostro Gordo, two miles away from the Plaza. It is on the boundary line, and near the sea. It will hold a battalion, though half that number of men are a sufficient garrison. These main works are connected up by smaller

forts, and the approaches are thoroughly searched. Each fort is quite self-contained. They are of solid masonry, and have two tiers of fire, besides a conning-tower. The command of each fort is about 30 feet. The first tier is from excellent barrack-rooms, and the second from the roof, with a parapet giving ample cover. All have capacious water-tanks and sufficient storage room, and at Purissima Concepcion there is a good well. They are armed chiefly with 9-cm. Krupp guns, and are impregnable against an enemy without artillery. But their own 9-cm. Krupps with solid shell would make short work of them. Melilla is dominated from the east by the fine mountain range of Gurugu. The mountain has two peaks, each nearly 3000 feet high, the summit of the nearest of which is fully three miles laterally from the Plaza, and its under-features run down to the river De Oro on the west and close to the shore of the Mar Chica on the north, one spur running actually half a mile into the little sea. At about six miles from Melilla the natural Mamelon of Atalayon is at the end of a spur of the mountain which rises as its last effort to 330 feet before it drops abruptly into the Mar Chica. Fort Camillos is itself on a ridge, which in fact is an under-feature of the mountain, and Purissima Concepcion is on another. But the spurs on which they stand curl down from a far distant ridge of the mountain, and, falling, provide a defensive glacis to each. Beyond Gururu east and south is another fine range of mountains, Beni-bu-Ifrur; and it has been known for some years that valuable minerals were

to be found there, and efforts are not new to secure concessions. It is about three years ago that it was first proposed to improve the harbour at Melilla, and a railway line was constructed about two miles north-west of the Plaza to get stones for the purpose. The engineers that studied the harbour project kept their eyes opened elsewhere too, and the result has been the formation of a Spanish syndicate (a Scotsman is a prominent member of it), who have obtained mineral rights in Beni-bu-Ifrur. Now the nearest spur of this range is fully ten miles from Melilla, while the range stretches to the south and east fully ten miles farther, until the river Quert is reached to the south, and to the south-east and east the spurs lose themselves in the Zeluan plain. But this concession was not granted by the Maghzen. Mulai Abdul-Aziz was Sultan then, and he had nothing to do with the concession. It was granted by the pretender Mohamed Bu Hamara (the Roghi), who also gave concessions for two lines of railway to the mine-fields, and permission to work the minerals and to erect the necessary buildings. But the limits of the Spanish settlement extended then only for a radius of about two and a half miles from the citadel. So this mining enterprise was full of risks. There are two companies interested in these mineral fields—(1) the Spanish syndicate of the mines of the Riff, and (2) the French North African Company. The honours of having first obtained mineral rights are disputed, but apparently the French company now holds its lease from the Spanish syndicate,



and they have a lead-mine about thirteen miles from Melilla, on Mount Afra, which is one of the northern features of Beni-bu-Ifrur, overlooking the Zeluan plain. The Spanish hopes are based on a mass of iron ore which is at Uixen, right in the heart of the mountain, and just south of the Atlaten peak, about twenty miles from Melilla. It is stated that the ore runs 70 per cent of pure iron, and that the work of development will be quarrying, not mining. During the spring and summer of 1907-8 the Spanish formation level for a railway of 1-metre gauge was made as far as the Uixen mines, with twelve bridges and culverts, two being of 25-metre span and one of 20 metres, and with two station-houses and ten little railway store-houses (called Casetas, first, second, third, &c.) along the line. Mining buildings were in course of erection at Uixen, and they also built a European house for the Roghi in the Kasbah at Zeluan. *Pari passu* with this private enterprise the Spanish Government built a fine market-place a mile from the Plaza (the Zoco), in the direction of the Spanish railway, and intercourse with the Riff people seemed after centuries of occupation about to be developed. Then in 1908 came the downfall of Mulai Aziz and his succession by Mulai Hafid. The whole of Morocco was upset, and the feelings towards foreigners became less friendly. It was probably the access of nationalism, impersonated by Mulai Hafid, which prompted the Riffs to rebel against their chosen chief, the Roghi. He had of course bled them well, and now he was accused of having admitted the foreigner to Beni-

bu-Ifrur, to his own great pecuniary gain. So in October 1908 the Roghi was expelled, his modern house and most of the buildings inside the Kasbah were wrecked, as were also the buildings at Uixen; and damage was done to the railway stations and other buildings not under the guns of Melilla. In the spring of last year Spain determined to assert the mining rights in Beni-bu-Ifrur. The Spanish Minister at Tangier visited Mulai Hafid at Fez, but sustained severe rebuffs; while the special Embassy sent by Mulai Hafid to Europe in June firmly denied the validity of concessions granted by the Roghi. But meanwhile work had been resumed on the Spanish railroad, and the French Company had begun theirs, but of a gauge of only 60 cm.

No Spanish material was in Melilla before the first week in July; the French material was always far ahead of the work. The railway runs between the spurs of Gurugu and the Mar Chica due east until Atalayon is reached, then it bears away south-east to the village of Nador,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles (15 kilometres). From Nador the course is almost due south up to the Rio de Caballo (or Oued Uixen), which separates Gurugu from Beni-bu-Ifrur, and Uixen is shown in the syndicate's plan as 32 kilometres from the Plaza (20 miles). When it was decided to continue the railways, a camp was established at the Hippodrome, half a kilometre farther east than the Zoco, where two companies were quartered and a section of 9-cm. Krupps. A parapet was raised, and the whole was surrounded by a wire entanglement. There the French railway was

based, with offices, sheds, and good workshops. In June last year the attitude of the Riffs became rather threatening,—one week an ample supply of labour would be forthcoming, the next no labourers and threats of opposition. Among Melilla merchants the question of hostilities was freely discussed, and the spot where interference was predicted was near Atalayon, where the road turns south-east towards Nador. It was almost a true prophecy. General Don José Marina was Military Governor of Melilla, and he had at his disposal the following forces—viz. : 1 squadron of cavalry, 1 field battery, 1 mountain battery (both being armed with old pattern Schneider 75-mm. guns), 1 siege, 1 mortar, 1 howitzer battery, 15-cm. (of old pattern), two regiments—the 59th Melilla and 68th Africa—each of three battalions (a brigade under General Real), a battalion of Cazadores (discipline), 1 company Marines, 1 company Engineers, 1 section Commissariat, 1 section Medical Corps, 6 companies Garrison Artillery,—in all, 6500 men.

This was the normal number of units of the garrison, but they had been made up to war strength in the spring.

The infantry found a detachment at Restinga, on the Mar Chica and Chefarinas, to the east, off Cape del Agua.

General Marina's attitude in June was that this force could enable him to put in line 4000 men, and that, should hostilities be threatened, a demonstration of this force would be all that was necessary. Meanwhile, however, three mixed brigades had been mobilised in Spain at Barce-

lona, Madrid, and the Campo de Gibraltar (Andalusian). Each brigade consisted of 6 battalions of Cazadores, 1 squadron cavalry, 1 group mountain guns (Schneiders) and 2 sections of mitrailleuses, 1 company Engineers, 1 company Telegraphists, 1 company Commissariat, and 1 brigade Hospitals.

The first shot fired at Melilla was on the 9th of July 1909. Five labourers and mechanics were killed, two wounded. It was about 1 P.M., and on the formation level of the Spanish railway, about half a mile east of the second Caseta. The rails had not been laid nearly as far on the Spanish line, but the French railway was complete to within half a kilometre.

The number of Riffs that attacked the Spanish party was about thirty. They were ambushed behind an adjoining ridge, and opened fire without warning. The railway house was connected by telephone with the Hippodrome, and news was sent there at once. A train was on its way on the French line, and the killed and wounded were put on to the train with the rest of the working party, without any interference from the Riffs. The train returned with its load to the Hippodrome, which was garrisoned by two companies of the Melilla regiment, and where there were also two sections of 9-cm. Krupps manned by garrison artillery. A major was normally in command, but he was away, and a captain took his place. He at once entrained a company, and sent it out to the scene of the disaster without informing Headquarters, although he was in telephonic communication with them. As soon as General Marina had

the news he sallied out with the force he considered sufficient,—*i.e.*, with two battalions of the Melilla regiment and one battalion African regiment—just half of his infantry,—and his battery of Schneider mountain artillery. He took up on that day the line of positions which have been held ever since—Sidi Hamed el Haj on the right, his left holding the unassailable peak of Atalayon, about six miles from the Plaza. This position was the only one possible, and was sufficiently strong. Sidi Hamed el Haj is a high knoll on the spur of Gurugu, which runs down to the Atalayon neck. It is impossible in such country to get a position on an under-feature which gives perfect cover, but the best possible is provided behind the Sidi Hamed rise. Marina was attacked vigorously on the 9th, but with nightfall the Riffs withdrew. General Real was in command at Melilla. Two miles behind the General's position was the second Caseta, and there he placed two companies of the Melilla regiment, while two more from the same battalion occupied Sidi Musi,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kilometre to the south of the railway, on a somewhat similar under-feature of Gurugu as Sidi Hamed el Haj, but of less command.

Meanwhile, on the 11th of July, the Barcelona brigade, under General Imaz, was put under orders for Melilla. It did not arrive until the 20th, and two fierce attacks on the line Sidi Hamed el Haj—Sidi Musa had been delivered on the 12th of July and on the 17th, the latter lasting through the night till the morning of the 18th. The Riffs charged right up to the guns at Sidi Hamed,

and the major commanding the battery of 9-cm. Krupps was killed. On the 20th General Imaz arrived with his brigade, three battalions of which were pushed out at once to strengthen the advanced line, which was placed under Imaz, while three battalions were placed in reserve at the Polygon, and General Marina returned at last to Melilla. But by this time the supply of the troops at the front had become a matter of anxiety. The only means of transport was the French railway and a number of mules. At the second Caseta was organised an advanced supply and store depot, but the Riffs had begun to give trouble to the convoys. On the 23rd of July action against them was organised. The half brigade at the Polygon was moved east, in advance of the daily convoys, and when, as was foreseen, a determined attack was made to prevent unloading the train, it was met by an equally determined counter-attack, and the Riffs were driven up the gorge between Sidi Musa and Sidi Hamed. Success seemed complete, but, hot-headed, a battalion followed the retreating Riff too far up the spur of the remoter (from Melilla) peak of Gurugu, and many Spanish corpses were found high up the mountain when it was occupied on the 29th of September. Still, the day was a success, though losses were very heavy, and particularly amongst the officers. It was on the 23rd of July that great pride was felt in the retirement of a body of Spanish infantry at a sort of processional slow march!—*Paradeschritt*.

Then on the 25th General Pintos's Madrid

Brigade began to arrive, and was there complete on the fateful 27th. The convoys had been persistently harassed, and on the 27th General Marina wished to try the experiment of a brigade operating to create a diversion, while he pushed his convoys through to the second Caseta, which was now the *point d'appui* of a considerable entrenched camp. Pintos's Brigade was chosen to play this part. But Marina did not know his man. The General was young and a favourite of fortune. He believed in his star. His instructions were to operate along the last main spur which runs down from Gurugu towards the sea and Melilla, and at the foot of which the Polygon camp had been established. East of this spur is a great gorge which crevasses the face of the nearer peak of Gurugu from its summit to its base. It is interrupted by the isolated Hill of Ait-Aissa, and bifurcates—each of the lesser gorges becoming main ducts for hostile movement against the railway. From the east slope of the Polygon spur the nearer duct could be searched, and it was Pintos's mission to echelon his brigade along this feature, so as to oppose an attack on the convoys and to threaten the retreat of adventurous raiders. But Pintos was not contented with this task,—he believed in his star. Two of his six battalions were marched straight from the wharf where they had that afternoon disembarked. It had been a wet, rough, cold passage from Malaga. Sea-sick, hungry, in full marching order, and with their little private belongings in their hands, they were marched to join their brigade.

The details of Pintos's engagement are hard to follow, but he hurled his brigade against swarms of Riffs into the nearer gorge. His leading battalion, the Las Navas, was decimated, only seven officers of the battalion were unhit, and five of his six commanding officers were killed or wounded. He himself was shot, far in advance, near a cone-shaped peak which the Riffs used as their look-out post. Then soon after the retreat began. If in its later stages, with night falling, it became somewhat precipitate, who can blame the men much? They were young soldiers who were hardly instructed to manœuvre at all. They had scarcely moved off the barrack-square in Spain. Many of them had disembarked a few hours before, sick and wretched. None of them were inured to life in the camp. It is wonderful that they should have made such a gallant attack against some of the best mountaineers in the world on the side of a precipitous mountain, which is most painful to climb under peaceful conditions. When Gurugu was taken, nearly 300 bodies were found in the gorge. They were brought to Melilla and buried. The number of casualties owned to officially were 34 officers and about 200 men killed and 500 wounded. But 500 killed is not too high a number to assert, and on the 4th August the correspondent of 'The Times' was told in the Military Hospital that 1300 wounded had been admitted there—besides those treated regimentally. There were few casualties between the 27th July and 4th August,—so the first five days' fighting cost Spain dear.



This serious reverse necessitated the immediate despatch of reinforcements, and General Tovar's Division of Cazadores was completed on 31st July by the arrival of the Andalusian Brigade under General Morales, of like strength to the other two that had come. General Alfau took the place of General Pintos at the head of the Barcelona Brigade, and then followed General Orosko's Division from Madrid, which consisted of—

Cavalry—2 squadrons Maria Christina Regiment.

Field-Artillery—3 Batteries (75-mm. Schneider Q.F.F.)

1st Brigade. General Aguilera.

1. Del Rey Regiment.

38. Leon „

2nd Brigade. General San Martin.

6 Saboya Regiment.

50 Wadras „

Engineers. 1 Telegraph. 1 Field Company.

With Medical and Administrative services.

Each regiment was of two battalions about 750 strong. The batteries are of 4 guns. The squadron of the Maria Christina had 130 horses.

It was once intended to have sent a brigade of dragoons on the heels of Orosko's Division, but other counsels prevailed, and the Princessa's Hussars alone came, counting three strong squadrons, which events proved to be ample, though they were afterwards made up to fifteen. The reason probably why the Dragoon Brigade was not sent was that they were quartered round Barcelona, and the political condition of that centre did not permit of the removal of mobile troops.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION.

ON the day after my arrival, Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself accompanied the Spanish column which was daily sent out from the town with provisions and supplies for the advance post. This column generally consisted of the train laden with supplies, and of mule transport, and was accompanied by two or three battalions of infantry, two batteries of mountain-guns, and a squadron of cavalry as escort. The Moors, debouching from the Gorge of Mount Gurugu, made repeated attacks on this column, which left the Hippodrome at 10 A.M. daily, and generally returned between five and six in the evening. As I have already explained, the line of the railroad winds at the foot of the lower spurs of the Gurugu—at one point these approach within about 500 yards of the line,—and as they were in the possession of the enemy, it can be easily understood what a fine position he had to debouch from and to deliver a sudden attack, whilst among the boulders, broken ground, and deserted houses, his marksmen could lie concealed and snipe at the long column of

infantry, cavalry, guns, and transport, which were exposed to full view. Colonel Lewis told me that on a previous journey he had made down the line, he was sitting in the train when the enemy delivered a sudden attack from the Gorge of Gurugu, inflicting several casualties on the Spanish. One bullet passed through three men sitting side by side on a seat, and an officer was killed and the two others wounded. Day after day for nearly two months this convoy was exposed to attack, and it was only the final advance which ended in the capture of Nador and Zeluan, and the occupation of the hill called Ait-Aissa, that put a stop to it. It is almost incredible that any General should have exposed young troops to such a nerve-trying experiment, in which the casualties usually amounted to ten or twelve per day. The Spaniards only had to seize the hill called Ait-Aissa, which commands the Gorge of Gurugu, and they might have enjoyed perfect security in replenishing their advance posts at Sidi Musa, Sidi Hamet el Haj, the Secunda Casata, and Atalayon. Why they did not do so it is difficult to say, but I fancy the memory of the disaster to General Pintos's Brigade had sunk so deep into their minds that they preferred having their transport attacked, and suffering this daily loss, rather than risk a second attempt to occupy what they believed must be an impregnable position. But it would have been quite easy to have seized the hill in the evening or in the early hours of the morning, when the enemy almost entirely abandoned it, returning to Nador and Zeluan to eat and to sleep. The bare

slopes of Gurugu afford little or no sustenance to any large body of men, and in my opinion a resolute attack might have taken the hill at any time. A blockhouse could have been quickly erected on it, as was subsequently done, and the lines of communication would have enjoyed that security which it should be the primary object of every General to obtain. Quite apart from these reasons, there were the heavy losses which were daily suffered to absolutely no purpose; and there is nothing sadder or makes one more angry with the incompetence of Generals than to see the lives of men wasted for no end whatever. It is far better to lose a few men in a direct attack on a position which could easily be held when taken, and which gives the troops all the confidence and *elan* of a profitable victory, than day after day to drivel away a few lives without the attainment of any real result. But if the strategical error was great, the tactical errors of this daily operation were greater still. It should be the object of the commander of an escort to convoys to save the latter from molestation. Hopeless confusion arises from having mules laden with provisions under fire, and it is extremely demoralising for the men who are in charge of them, who do not carry arms, and thus can enjoy none of the excitement of feeling they are actually taking part in a fight. Thus the escorting infantry protecting the flank of the convoy should be thrown out at a sufficient distance to leave the latter in comparative peace, except for stray bullets. The guns should be in a position where they can open a telling fire with-

out being too exposed to the enemy's marksmen, and the cavalry should be kept out of harm's way altogether unless required for reconnaissance.

But at Melilla the keenest admirer of the Spaniards could not help admitting that their convoy work was of the most elementary and unscientific character. The train laden with provisions, the mule transport, the guns, the cavalry and protecting infantry, marched out day after day in one long column, hopelessly jumbled together, and all equally exposed to the enemy's fire. When passing the most dangerous point opposite the gorge, the infantry were extended in single file on the exposed flank at a distance of about fifty yards from the column it was their duty to protect. When the enemy opened fire they would lie down and return it individually or reply with volleys; but the enemy was far too well concealed for this demonstration to have the slightest effect, and it merely led to a ludicrous waste of ammunition. I have seen two or three Moorish marksmen in a little village five hundred yards away worry the column for three or four hours, and although only armed with obsolete rifles, they often inflicted several casualties. I have seen the mountain-guns, assisted by those in the forts, plaster the village with shrapnel for hour after hour without in any way disturbing the equanimity of the Moorish marksmen. Yet all that was required was for a battalion or a couple of companies to extend in open order and occupy the vantage-ground which the Moors were left in possession of. This same farce went on day after day, but in justice

it must be said that many of the Spanish regimental officers realised the folly of it, and were only too willing to adopt the course I have suggested; but the orders of Headquarters were implicit, and no departure was allowed from the set rule. Then, again, half a squadron or a squadron of cavalry was sent out with the column, and presented the best target of all to the Moors. They could be of no possible use, for the country was far too rough and broken to admit of their employment, and they might well have been exercised in a safer and more opportune manner. It was exciting work accompanying the convoy, for you never knew at what moment you might be attacked or from where skilled marksmen were going to send a shot. The most dangerous part of the road was just before you came to Sidi Musa, for here the lower spurs of Gurugu are within a few hundred yards of the roads, and there is no possible retreat out of rifle-fire, for behind you is the Mar Chica. Between the road and the Mar Chica is three or four hundred yards of sandy-looking ground, which at first sight appears to be admirable going. I was sadly disillusioned on the first journey I made with the convoy, for, wishing to get as far away as possible from the sniping, I thought I would leave the road and skirt the Mar Chica. But I had not gone a hundred yards, pursued by several shots, when my horse sank up to his withers in the treacherous marshy soil, and I only got him out with difficulty. Always afterwards I remained on the high-road, and when

crossing this dangerous zone would gallop as hard as possible, whilst the enemy, if they happened to be present, took running shots, generally without much result.

On the day after my arrival at Melilla, Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself went on the train, for our horses had not arrived. The enemy were, I am glad to say, taking a day off, for they molested us very little. But they really missed a good opportunity, for at the most exposed point of the line the train was stopped, and we were all dismounted and made to line the embankment in an attitude of defence whilst the cinematograph took pictures of this warlike burlesque. I subsequently saw some of these reproduced in the Spanish illustrated papers, under such titles as "Heroic Defence of the Train," or "Our Brave Soldiers Repulsing a Sudden Attack." The Spaniards have a great deal of childishness in their character. They adore the heroic in warfare, and if they cannot get the genuine article are quite content with a substitute such as I have named. They are the most casual and leisurely race I have ever associated with. They seem to lack all that great sustained driving power which is so essential for the accomplishment of great enterprises. They are never in a hurry, and with them time is no element in warfare. It was the object of General Marina to accumulate stores as rapidly as possible at his advance posts, so that when the expected reinforcements arrived he could at once assume the offensive and finish the campaign. But there was little energy displayed in this concentration. But one train a-day

was sent out, where two or three might easily have been despatched. On its arrival at the Second Caseta the stores were unloaded in the most leisurely manner, and much time was wasted. But no one seemed to care, and all appeared perfectly content with the rate of progression. On the day of our first visit to the Secunda Caseta we were received in the most friendly manner by the commander of the post. He took us all round, and showed us the 250,000 rations which had already been collected together. Then he took us to his tent, and introduced us to the officers of the garrison. They had frequently had a very lively time, for the tent was riddled with bullets which had been fired from the mountain. The hospitality of the Spanish officers was very pleasing. They always entertained one sumptuously, and on this occasion wine and brandy, and such other luxuries as the garrison could find, were given us. In fact, we passed such a pleasant time that we forgot the train was starting back, and it went off without us, leaving the Colonel, Fortescue, and myself to trudge the six kilometres to Melilla on foot. We were, however, very energetic, and on our way back called at Sidi Musa, and were introduced to the officers of that post, which is even more exposed than the Secunda Caseta. The journey back to Melilla was very long and very trying, for the heat was great and we had no water, but luckily at the Hippodrome we picked up a carriage.

A few days later we visited the advance posts of Sidi Hamed el Haj, which had been held ever



since its occupation on July 20 by General Imaz's Brigade from Barcelona. It had been the scene of great activity on the part of the Moors, who, although they had relinquished their attempts to recapture it, never ceased their constant sniping from the neighbouring hills, which caused frequent casualties and kept the garrison in a continual state of unrest. All the supplies of the garrison and all the water had to be brought from Melilla, twelve kilometres away; and the officers of the garrison told me that not only was drinking water very scarce, but they had not been able to obtain any for washing for over a month; for all the water in the immediate neighbourhood was very saline and unfit for use, although the mules and horses had to drink it, as it was impossible to supply them with any other. These hardships, combined with the fact that it was impossible for you to show your head above cover without drawing the enemy's fire, rendered life in Sidi Hamed el Haj anything but pleasant. We were most hospitably received by General Imaz, and lunched with the officers of the garrison. They told me many tales of the surprising courage and fanaticism shown by the Moors. One of them the Spanish had christened Brother John. At daybreak he always took up a position in a ruined house 400 yards from the fort, and opened fire with a Mauser rifle on any living soul who approached or left the cover of the sand-bags, in spite of the repeated efforts of the artillery to dislodge him. The officers told me that each morning they could see large numbers of the Moors leave the plains of Nador, where they

spent the night, and climb the mountain, where they occupied various posts, from which they could harass the convoys and snipe at the garrison. Their flocks and herds they left in charge of the women and children, who could be seen tending them as if unconscious of the existence of hostilities. At nightfall the warriors returned to Nador to feast and to revel; and thus refreshed, hundreds of them would return in the night to the neighbourhood of the fort, bringing with them musical instruments and singing "La Allah il Allah." They shouted out from the darkness insults and taunts at the Spanish garrison, saying, "Do you want cigarettes? Here are some," at the same moment pouring in a volley. An officer told me that never before in warfare had he heard such horrible language pass between the combatants; for the Moors, to save ammunition, hurled epithets, and the Spaniards replied with equal vigour.

Sidi Hamed el Haj was a five-sided redoubt, but of irregular trace. Its salient angle was thrust out over the crest of the under-feature on which it is built for about twenty yards, and its armament consisted of four mountain-guns and four Krupp g.m.

Along the crest was a battery of mountain-guns. On the left face were the Krupps,—two firing over the crest across the eastern spur of the main ridge which descends from the mountain; two below the crest firing down a re-entrant which runs farther north of that spur. Along the crest to each flank of the mountain was a parados with banquette, so that if the salient were carried the redoubt re-

mained still closed. The whole of the interior space of the redoubt was below the crest, and was occupied by the garrison in front and by horses and mules lower down.

Mules were stabled outside on the north-west face towards the first Caseta, but they formed too great a bait for the Riffs, and some were carried away under fire from the garrison in a dark night.

One of our kindest friends in Melilla was Major Huelen of the Artillery, who was chief of the arsenal,—a big, stout, genial man, who had been educated at Stoneyhurst, and speaks English like an Englishman. And, indeed, he is very English in his thoughts and ways, and he told me that originally his family came from the neighbourhood of Southampton, when doubtless they spelt their name Whelling. He had a house in the Plaza, and from its roof is a splendid view towards the north-east. The Mediterranean, the Mar Chica, and its bar to Restinga, the railway as far as Nador, and Gurugu and its gorges, lie exposed like a map under the lens of the powerful telescope which made the Major's roof the most interesting private possession in the Plaza. As chief of the arsenal, he was denied active service after the stirring events of July. He had an important command of Artillery on 23rd July in place of a major who had been killed. Since then his rôle was limited to filling the shells which his brother-gunners fired. His observatory was an important point of observation from an artillery point of view, because thence it could best be judged how

the fire of the different batteries converged, and (most important) how the fuses were timed. In early August a cone-shaped peak above the gorge so fatal to Pintos absorbed hourly attention, for here was the most commanding Riff outpost. There behind the boulders crouched a number of sentinels, from two to twenty. Probably the picquet was of the latter strength, with one, two, or three double sentry posts. But the Riffian is a sportsman, and the whole picquet were to be seen dotted round this eyrie, if there was anything of interest to be observed below. They covered themselves wonderfully when the guns began to fire, and I have seen half a dozen 6-inch shells burst round the peak without apparently putting them to any inconvenience. Major Huelén was a mine of information on all subjects. Commanding officers of every branch of the army were finally dependent on him for the fighting efficiency of their corps; and so, in return for shells and Mauser cartridges, they left behind record of many experiences and hopes of future enterprise. With due discretion his English friends were allowed sometimes to profit. He also introduced us to Don Manuel Becerra, chief engineer of the Harbour Works, and of the Spanish Railway—an invaluable ally.

On the 12th August, by the goodwill of the General and of Don Manuel Becerra, we all three paid a visit to Restinga. We were given a passage on the large steam-launch and tug *Reina Victoria*. She had in tow three lighters laden with rations and ammunition for the garrison, and it took us three hours to make our point. The

day was bright and clear,—the sky of that pale turquoise blue which the North African coast alone can show. Gurugu towered above us, and as we left Melilla behind, the little old-time fortress, with its roof and towers of many colours blended by the distance, shone out an opal set in a sapphire sea. Then we passed Atalayon, farther off, and Sidi Hamed el Haj, which fired as we passed a salvo of 9-cm. Krupp guns towards Nador, and their bursting shells showed us clearly the points of Riff occupation. We were rowed ashore by a useful-looking boat's crew of coast-guardsmen,—the boatswain, a good-looking, fair-haired, blue-eyed youth, reminding one that a British army once occupied Spain. We arrived just as the officers were sitting down to lunch, and in a few minutes we found ourselves among as cordially hospitable soldier-hosts as it has ever been my good fortune to fall among. Then we were shown everything that Restinga held. The bar is very narrow, and the little channel cut from the Mediterranean to the Mar Chica (that day hardly carrying any water) forms a moat to barracks which provide ample space for two full companies (200 men each), with a good hospital, a magazine, and commissariat store. The two companies that were there on the 12th August were of the Melilla Regiment. The whole is surrounded by a wide and high wire-entanglement: a little west, on a high point of the bar dominating the camp and its southern and western glacis, is a well-constructed octagonal fort. The barrack-rooms of its first tier are very cool and comfortable.

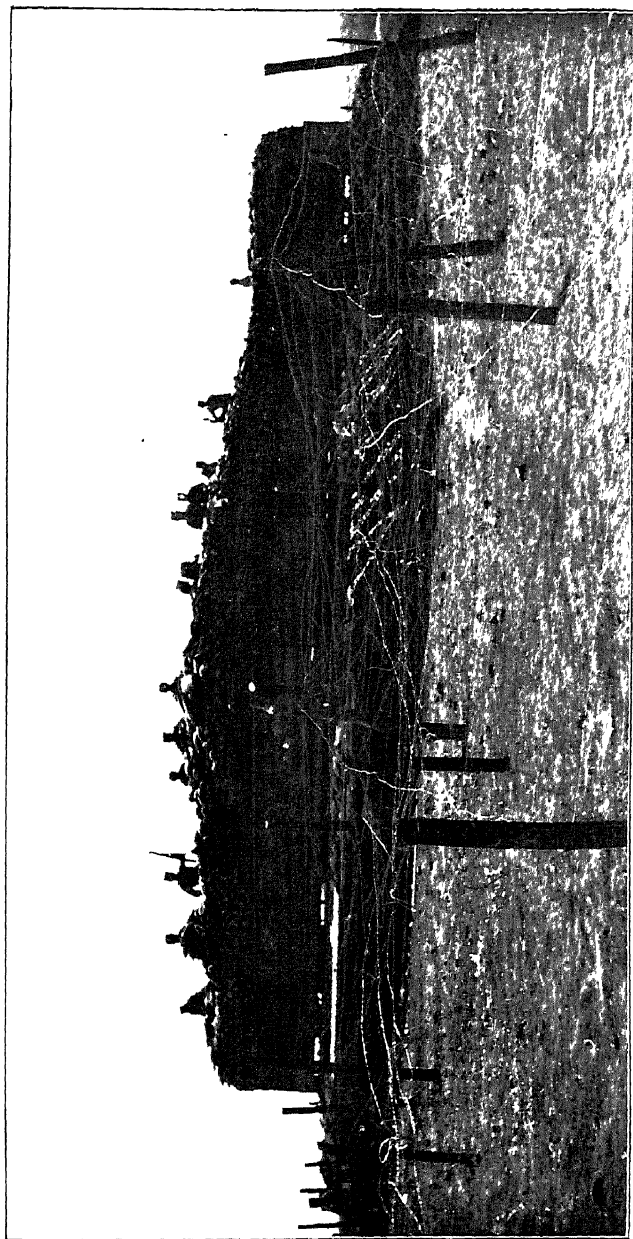
The roof or second tier commands all approaches to the barracks but one, a higher point north-west, while from the central conning-tower a splendid view is had. To the east are the Quebdana mountains, running from far south to their northernmost point, where they end in the sea at Cape del Agua. To the south, over the Mar Chica, we looked to the land of promise, the plains of Zeluan, with the old Kasbah faintly discernible in the hazy distance, and behind, south and west of that again, are the mountains of Beni-bu-Ifrur, that hold the mines, the *fons et origo malorum* to the Riff and to Spain. On the higher point of the bar, 300 yards farther north-west, was another work, a blockhouse, defensibly commendable, but, structurally, as uncomfortable a barrack as one could well conceive. I have never been in a hotter.

Our journey home was one of much anxiety, for as we left our hospitable friends of the Melilla Regiment, the guns of Melilla and the whole line of railway outposts began firing. We could hear their dull booming only too distinctly, and of course we feared that we had missed the good thing of the campaign. We were reassured when we reached Melilla, though, for the sporting Riffs had done nothing more than draw a heavy fire of costly shells. Poor Huelen! He was already bitterly complaining of the reckless expenditure of ammunition, for it was all that the arsenal could do to keep abreast of it.

The constant harassing of convoys decided Marina to add greatly to the fixed defences along the line from the Hippodrome to the second

Caseta. The first blockhouse was begun on the 8th August. One officer and sixty men were sent to construct it. By nightfall a mere breastwork of sand-bags had been put in place, and the Riffs then invested them. The officer was in telephonic communication with the Hippodrome, and appealed for reinforcements, but he received a reply from General Marina that men showed greater courage in small numbers! He held his post through the night, but did not live to see the morning; and at dawn 15 of his men's dead bodies lay by him, and there were 14 wounded. The Riffs were in such numbers that they had been able to tear up 500 metres of the French railway, and twist it round like a corkscrew. Finally, a very workmanlike blockhouse arose there, and another like it a kilometre nearer the second Caseta; a partly ruined dwelling west of the first Caseta was also put into a state of defence, and a great sand-bag fort was constructed halfway between this house and the Hippodrome, round an iron erection for washing ore—the Labaderos. So there was a defensive post every kilometre from the Rio de Oro to the second Caseta.

Now Europe connects the Spanish Riff war with mining venture alone. In Spain a section of the press attacked the Government for getting involved in a war to bolster up mining speculations. The same thing was said about a more extensive war in which England was engaged ten years ago. There was probably a grain of reason in both charges; but as in the Transvaal, England, so in the Riff, Spain, had wider



*A Spanish Blackhouse.*





national aims. Spain's ambition was to create a great mercantile harbour on a short road to the interior of Morocco and to Fez. The preliminary works towards the construction of a harbour at Melilla were not encouraging. There is want of depth in the roads, and the wash of the Mediterranean from the north-west is very strong—and so the harbour works staff turned their attention to the Mar Chica. This little inland sea is about 26 kilometres in length from north to south-east, and sweeps south in a rough semicircle, of which the radius from the middle of its northern shore is about 13 kilometres. It is known in two divisions,—the south and south-eastern section is called El-Jezireh. It is much the larger of the two, and washes the northern boundary of the Zeluan plain, till it curls by Nador up to Atalayon, which marks its division from the smaller but deeper area of Sebka-bu-Areh. It is cut off from the Mediterranean by a sand and gravel bar varying from 500 to 600 metres in width,—in parts very low, and covered with palmetto and other scrub growth, and in parts it rises to 50 or 60 feet above the sea. Thirty years ago at the western end, about 4 kilometres from Melilla, was a narrow canal between the Mediterranean and Mar Chica, known as the Bocana. At 5 kilometres from the eastern end is Restinga, where there is a military post and a narrow canal still open, but so silted up with sand that through it the Mediterranean water trickles rather than runs. Fifteen kilometres farther on the Quebdana Mountains end in Cape

del Agua, off which are the Spanish Chefarinas Islands. It is now the acknowledged intention of Spain to open a canal near the Bocana, though not actually over the same course, because eruptive action is said to have thrown up a rocky obstruction. The Mar Chica has fallen much owing to evaporation, for no water comes in since the Bocana has silted up, except by infiltration. The level is 2·35 metres lower than the level of the Mediterranean, and it is calculated that by a canal 6 metres deep the mean depth of the Mar Chica may be increased to an average of 5 metres. Early in August it was hoped that, using the old channel at the Bocana, by a suction dredge a canal might be opened in less than two months. We three correspondents were taken out to the Bocana, and were hospitably entertained at lunch by Don Manuel Becerra. In a waggonette with four horses we went at full gallop along the sea-soaked sand of the shore between Melilla and the Bocana, sometimes up to the axles in water—a most exhilarating drive. There we found a military fatigue-party constructing a small redoubt, and hauling ashore the pipes through which the dredge was to work. We had plenty of time to consider and assimilate Don Manuel's plans, for, unfortunately, the lunch had not yet arrived. Two friendly pack-mules finally brought us our lunch, and under a hastily raised tent we drank to the health of Spain's future Bizerta.

But all hopes of a quickly constructed canal have been abandoned, and if one is opened by

next August it is as much as can be hoped for. Meanwhile, a section of the Spanish railway has been constructed to the inner end of the Bocana, and a strong pier has been run out into the Sebka section of the Mar Chica, where there are several light-draught steam and motor tugs, and perhaps a dozen sailing boats, besides a cruiser's armed steam-launch, which is an excellent preserver of the peace on the inland sea.

Restinga was called into existence first by private enterprise. A company formed the idea of erecting a factory there to trade with the Riffs by perhaps the easiest road to Taza and Fez. They made the narrow canal which is still in existence, though of little use; and by the Mar Chica and Zeluan, thence to the Quert Valley and south, a road to a golden harvest seemed to be opening, but their funds were insufficient.

With Melilla on the north-west and Chefarinas on the south-east, why should not Spain now create a great trading-station on the southern shores of the land-locked little sea? It will depend, of course, on whether a canal can be dredged for ocean-going vessels. Given that possibility, the future of such a venture would be assured, for there is not one good harbour on the Morocco coast till Agadir is reached, far away south-west in the Sus country.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE OCCUPATION OF ZOCO DEL ARBAA.

ON August 24, at the early hour of 4 A.M., Melilla was astir. Although there had been rumours of an advance I could learn nothing for certain overnight, but I was aroused by the sound of tramping feet past my window, and on looking out I saw infantry, cavalry, guns, and transport rolling past in the dull morning light. Fortescue and myself wasted not a moment, but tumbled into our clothes, ordered our horses, and pursued the departing column. It soon became evident that something more than a mere promenade was intended, for the troops were in the highest spirits—singing, laughing, and joking with the townspeople, who were already astir, or gazed from their windows. We were joined by Colonel Lewis, and the three of us overtook the troops just beyond the Hippodrome. Here they were halted, and by mingling with the rank and file and talking to old friends, we found out what the force consisted of and where they were going to. They were part of the First Brigade, consisting of two battalions of the Del Rey Regiment, accompanied

by two Schneider batteries and two squadrons of cavalry (the Maria Christina Regiment), under General Aguilera. They were bound for a place called Zoco del Arbaa, which is at the extreme end of the Mar Chica, where they were to establish a fortified camp, thus holding a point which would give access to the plains round Zeluan and Nador. The distance to be covered was about thirty-six kilometres, and as the troops were in full marching order I did not envy them their long and weary march in the hot sun over the heaviest going. The first person I met was Vallacerrato, who introduced me to another noble volunteer, the Duke de Zaragoza. Both were serving in the ranks, and carried the same equipment as the humblest private, with the exception that they had wisely managed to get rid of the heavy knapsacks carried by the Spanish soldiers. It is impossible to withhold a tribute of admiration for the conduct of the many volunteers who came forward in the hour of their country's need to take their place side by side with the peasants of Spain. Most of them were of noble birth, unaccustomed to hardship, some married, and some extremely wealthy. Yet they bore all the hardships and ate of the same simple fare as their comrades; they never grumbled, and always set an excellent example to the troops in action. I saw a great deal of Vallacerrato and Zaragoza, but there were many others who served with equal courage and distinction. I could not help contrasting the sorry spectacle the two presented on this occasion to what they must have looked

like in Madrid a month before. Their uniform was dirty, their faces unshaven ; they were already covered with dust and dirt, and their only luxuries consisted of hard biscuits, tinned meat, and a bottle of water, already half-consumed, although the hour was not yet 8 A.M. Yet both were cheerful and full of fight, delighted at the prospect of escaping from Melilla, and of earning the stripes which had been promised them after an engagement with the enemy. I think it is an excellent thing to have volunteers of high position distributed amongst the troops, especially of the character of the Spanish, who place the greatest reliance on their leaders. It certainly made the war far more popular with the rank and file when they saw the upper classes, who stood to lose so much, hasten to the front and risk their lives for their country. Then, again, every soldier brought into contact with those who are wealthy or who are the owners of large estates, always has the prospect of doing some little action to assist his more fortunate comrade, which would ensure for him some job in the household or on the estate for the remainder of his days. Thus there were always willing hands to carry a rifle or to take an extra knapsack at the close of a hard day's work, and there was always an excellent spirit of *camaraderie* existing between officers, men, and volunteers.

General Aguilera's Brigade was to march to Zoco del Arbaa by the seashore past Restinga ; and as there was no possible chance of an engagement with the enemy during the march, and very little prospect of one immediately on reaching their

destination, we decided not to accompany the column, but to wait a few days longer in Melilla to watch the general course of events. We wished them all the best of luck, and promised to join them later, and departed to telegraph the glorious news that the long-delayed advance had already commenced. But, as was anticipated, the First Brigade occupied Zoco del Arbaa without opposition, and entrenched their camp. The Moors then commenced a series of petty attacks on the position, but of course could make no impression on it. They then confined themselves to sniping it by night. Meanwhile Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself made preparations to join the First Brigade at Zoca del Arbaa. On July 26 General Marina left by sea to inspect the garrison at that post. He returned the same day. On August 27 a High Mass was said for the repose of the souls of those who fell in the disaster which overwhelmed General Pintos exactly a month before. It was an imposing ceremony, which troops of all arms attended. There were about 10,000 men on parade, which was held on the very limits of the Spanish lines towards the scene of the disaster. At the moment of the Elevation of the Host, the guns of Fort Camilloa saluted the Moors with salvos of artillery, and the infantry in the entrenchments opened up a defiant fire. The exploding shells cast a filmy halo over the gorge where brave men had died a month before. On July 28 the Spanish garrison at Zoco del Arbaa was reinforced by a battalion of the Leon Regiment, and another was due to leave on the follow-



ing day. On August 29 Fortescue, Colonel Lewis, and myself left for the front. We had had the utmost difficulty in securing any transport, but finally hired a cart and two mules to take our baggage. After a long hunt Fortescue managed to purchase an excellent horse from a Moor—almost a pure Arab, and one of the strongest and hardiest animals obtainable. We left Melilla at 8 A.M. Our cavalcade consisted of ourselves, the cart, our groom Paco—a jockey from Tangier, an excellent horseman who had formerly three times won the Grand Prix in Madrid, and who, in addition to possessing many other talents, was also one of the best swimmers I have ever known. We were soon in great difficulties, for the road runs by the seashore the whole way from Melilla to Restinga, and our heavily-laden waggon sank at times almost up to its axle in the soft sand. We made better progress, however, when we drove the waggon in the sea itself, where the sand was harder. The day was very hot, and we all reached Restinga extremely fatigued. Here we had a brief halt, met the officers of the Spanish garrison, and then pressed on the last six kilometres to Zoco del Arbaa, reaching the camp at about 5 P.M., with the waggon an hour behind us. Our arrival was totally unexpected, and we were stopped by the guard; but on presenting our passes were allowed to pass the entrenchments, and soon found ourselves amongst the officers of the Del Rey Regiment. The Moors, as if to greet us on our arrival, immediately appeared in small numbers and commenced to fire on the camp.



*Vallacerrato, Zaragoza, Captain Prince de Bourbon.*



The Schneider guns were taken outside, and we watched some petty shooting which quickly drove off the enemy. I then met Vallacerrato and Zaragoza, who introduced me to Captain Prince de Bourbon, who is the cousin of the present king, and a most charming man, of whom I shall have more to say later. Prince de Bourbon then introduced us to General Aguilera, who seemed somewhat surprised at the sudden apparition of three total strangers at his camp; but on our showing him our passes he at once became all smiles and affability, welcomed us in the most hospitable manner, ordered his chief of staff to give us a suitable site for our tent, and said we should ask him for anything we required. A little later our waggon rolled up, and we pitched our tent and made ourselves comfortable for the night. According to our invariable practice on campaigns, Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself had brought a large stock of provisions and wines in order to be quite independent. That evening we had a merry party with the officers of the Del Rey Regiment, and so quickly exhausted our stock that Colonel Lewis and myself decided to return to Melilla on the following morning and bring out a fresh supply, as there seemed no prospect of an immediate forward advance until reinforcements reached the front. Worn out by the heat and long journey, I fell asleep in the open outside the tent, and about 2 A.M. I was aroused by tremendous firing from the entrenchments round the camp, and by the whistle of bullets flying overhead. The Moorish marksmen had crept up

close, and the Spanish troops on duty were trying to keep them at a distance by firing volleys. When it became evident nothing serious was intended, we turned in and went to sleep again, devoutly trusting a stray bullet would not come our way whilst asleep. On the following morning, August 30, Colonel Lewis and myself started for Melilla, leaving Fortescue at Zoco del Arbaa to report on any events of interest. We spent two days in the town, and heard on the evening of September 1, when the General's aide-de-camp came and dined with us, that the Moors had attacked the camp at Zoco del Arbaa, but had been driven off. The next morning, having replenished our supplies, we again started for Zoco del Arbaa. Colonel Lewis and myself reached the camp at 4.30, but our heavily-laden waggon—full of all the luxuries purchasable at Melilla—only got as far as Restinga. We found the camp in a state of uproar, and our friend Fortescue having the time of his life. That day the officers of the First Brigade had a big dinner in the open air, and Fortescue, having greatly distinguished himself in the fight of the previous day, was being royally entertained. Colonel Lewis and myself were invited to a hearty supplementary meal which, luckily for our late arrival, was intended for those officers who had been on duty. After the dinner we had an open-air concert, and I have never listened to anything finer than the singing of the Spanish officers: many of them had excellent voices, and sang old Spanish songs to perfection, especially one officer with a rich tenor voice, who

sang old Andalusian love-songs. We were asked to contribute to the entertainment, but the only song we could raise between us was "Yip I Adee, I Aye," from "Our Miss Gibbs." The Spaniards were so taken with the tune that they quickly adapted it to their own language, and from henceforth "Yip I Adee" became a kind of official war-song of the First Brigade. In fact, I don't think a better tune, or one more cheering, could be found for troops in an attack on a position. Especially are the words "I don't care what becomes of me, since he sung me that sweet melodie," suitable for such an occasion. On the following morning the sad news was broken to us that General Marina had issued orders that no correspondents were to be allowed to remain in the advance lines during the night, but might be there all day and accompany the columns in the field. The reason of this order was not in any way directed against ourselves, but it was necessary to prevent a swarm of Spanish correspondents without experience, without horses, and without tents, from coming to the front and making themselves a general nuisance. It can be easily imagined that, having just settled comfortably at Zoco del Arbaa, we were not at all keen to pack up and return to Restinga. It was impossible to move that day, because our baggage-waggon had returned to Melilla, and we had only kept one mule with pack-saddles for use in the field, as we intended to make Zoco del Arbaa our permanent place. General Aguilera very kindly gave us permission to remain where we were, and thus we passed the whole day in

camp, and I had time to examine its construction. It was about 600 yards long and 300 deep, the right flank resting almost on the shore of the Mar Chica. It was fortified by a wire-entanglement and a deep trench, which the Spaniards kept working on until it must have been eight or ten feet deep, and had a banquette for the infantry to fire over. All the troops were in tents: the infantry on the front line, the guns, cavalry, and transport animals behind. The entrenchments completely encircled the camp, and so did the barbed wire-entanglement, but the former were much shallower in rear. The position was, in fact, perfectly impregnable, and therefore it seemed to me the Spaniards kept a quite unnecessary number of men on duty in the trenches during the night. There were always seven or eight hundred in the trenches, and if two or three Moorish marksmen commenced to snipe, they would open up a tremendous fire, which was quite innocuous, and led to a serious waste of ammunition. The ground in front of the camp was flat, but gradually rose at a distance of about a thousand yards. It gave a good field of fire, and no enemy could possibly hope to successfully press home an attack. But at the same time he could find excellent cover in the nullahs, corn, and scattered homesteads, from which to snipe the Spanish lines. At about three kilometres from the camp there was a large Moorish village called Akarman on rising ground, and completely covered by masses of prickly pears, as are all the villages in this neighbourhood. Here the enemy had their headquarters. They had even

constructed a fair-sized trench in front of the village, and through our glasses we could see large numbers of them watching and waiting for our expected attack.

That night we learned that General Aguilera was going to make a reconnaissance on the following morning towards a village on the seashore some ten kilometres away, called Moulai el Sherif. This was agreeable news, as it meant we would at least see the Spanish troops in the field before we were obliged to return to Restinga. The start was not an early one, and it was not until 9 A.M. that the force left camp. It was composed of two battalions of the Leon Regiment, 250 cavalry, and a battery of Schneider guns, with General Aguilera commanding in person. Fortescue and myself joined the outward march and accompanied the cavalry, who scouted on the right flank, which alone was open to attack, as the left rested on the sea. The object of the reconnaissance was to give moral support to those of the Quebdana tribesmen who professed to be friendly to Spain. We avoided the village of Akarman, where the enemy were known to be in considerable force, and no sooner had the Spaniards left camp than mounted warriors were seen dashing off across the plain towards Zeluan to warn the Kabyles in the vicinity. The Moors were not in sufficient force to molest our march, and we reached the village of Moulai el Sherif almost without firing a shot. The village was a large one, and evidently very prosperous from the amount of barley, corn, and live stock collected round the houses. Each of



these flew a large white flag in token of friendship, and on our approach the villagers came out and greeted us. The men were fully armed : most of them carried Remington or Martini rifles. Both men, women, and children mingled with the Spanish troops, sold them fruit and fetched them water ; and it was difficult to believe we were in a hostile country. At 12.30, when General Aguilera had obtained the necessary assurances of friendship from the headmen of the village, we commenced to return to camp. Then the scene changed, and hardly had our rear-guard cleared the outskirts of the village when considerable numbers of the enemy opened fire on the column from the houses, and also from our left flank—for bodies of horsemen had now arrived from Akarman and Zeluan. I could never understand why General Aguilera did not immediately retrace his steps and inflict a summary lesson on the treacherous inhabitants of Moulai el Sherif by burning their houses. But he was merely content to fight a rear-guard action, which never ceased until we actually passed into the entrenched camp at Zoco del Arbaa. The retirement was, on the whole, well carried out, but at times alarming gaps appeared in the rear-guard and flank-guard, due to the extended infantry not keeping in proper touch ; but as the enemy was not in sufficient force to press home an attack, as he subsequently did on several occasions during the campaign, this did not lead to disaster. For the first time I saw the Spanish infantry tested. During the whole of the retirement we remained with a

flank- or rear-guard. The infantry were well handled by the company officers, and seemed perfectly cool and self-contained under fire, but their shooting was execrable. I had never seen such a waste of ammunition. The men had no idea whatsoever of judging distance, and the officers no more than the men. Their ideas of a decisive range are very different to those of the officers of the recognised military Powers of Europe. They open fire at any enemy who appears within three thousand yards of the firing-line; and volleys are fired on the off-chance that a stray bullet may find its mark, or that at the least their arrival in the neighbourhood may scare their opponents. Over and over again I saw the bad shooting of the Spanish infantry; and against a civilised enemy on a modern battlefield, if they were to fire at the rate and at the impossible distances that they did in Morocco, their ammunition would be exhausted long before their enemy arrived at anything like a decisive range. During the retirement the Schneider guns received their first real test. The shooting was bad, many of the shrapnel shells bursting on the ground and doing no harm. They were also rather inclined, in the excitement of the retreat, to have premature explosions; and one shell very nearly finished off their own General. Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself were riding with Aguilera and his staff, when the enemy pressed home an attack on the rear-guard. The guns were unlimbered and opened up a rapid fire on the scattered body. We were between the rear-guard and the guns, when one of the shells

burst right amongst their own firing-line, happily without hitting any one. The General used some expressive phrase in Spanish, and we moved about twenty yards towards the flank, luckily for ourselves, as the very next shell from the same gun burst on the very spot on which we had been standing, splattering the ground all round with shrapnel bullets. I fancy General Aguilera had a few words of a not altogether tranquil nature with the commander of the offending battery. The troops reached camp with but few casualties. The men were in high spirits, for many of them had received their baptism of fire. After the fight, Fortescue, Lewis, and myself had to return to Restinga, owing to the order forbidding us to remain in the advance lines overnight. We were without tents, the greater part of our stores had not arrived from Zoco del Arbaa, and we passed a miserable night in the open, with a sandstorm blowing and the whole neighbourhood overrun with guns, horses, troops, and transport, who had halted there on their way to Zoco del Arbaa. We held a council of war, and decided to pitch a permanent camp at Restinga, and use that as our base for any forward movement. General Marina had meanwhile arrived at Restinga, and Captain de Bascaran, the General's aide-de-camp, told us that the order forbidding us to sleep at the front would probably shortly be relaxed. We learned the real reason for it from Bascaran. The French correspondents had from the first been very free in their criticisms of the Spanish operations, and as at no time is there any love lost between

a Frenchman and a Spaniard, this had led to a great deal of resentment. The French were, therefore, not allowed the same freedom of movement as ourselves, neither were the Spanish correspondents, which made them very jealous of us, although our personal relations were always of the most friendly character. All went well as long as we remained in Melilla, but when we started for the front and accompanied the troops in the field, the French wished to follow our example and come too. But this privilege was refused them, and they went in a body to General Marina, and laid a kind of ultimatum before him, threatening to leave the front in a body and to return to France. General Marina simply replied: "Gentlemen, you have my full permission to go." They went, and nothing more was seen of them for the remainder of the campaign. In order not to make it appear that we were receiving exceptional treatment, the General announced that no correspondents should sleep in the advance camps.

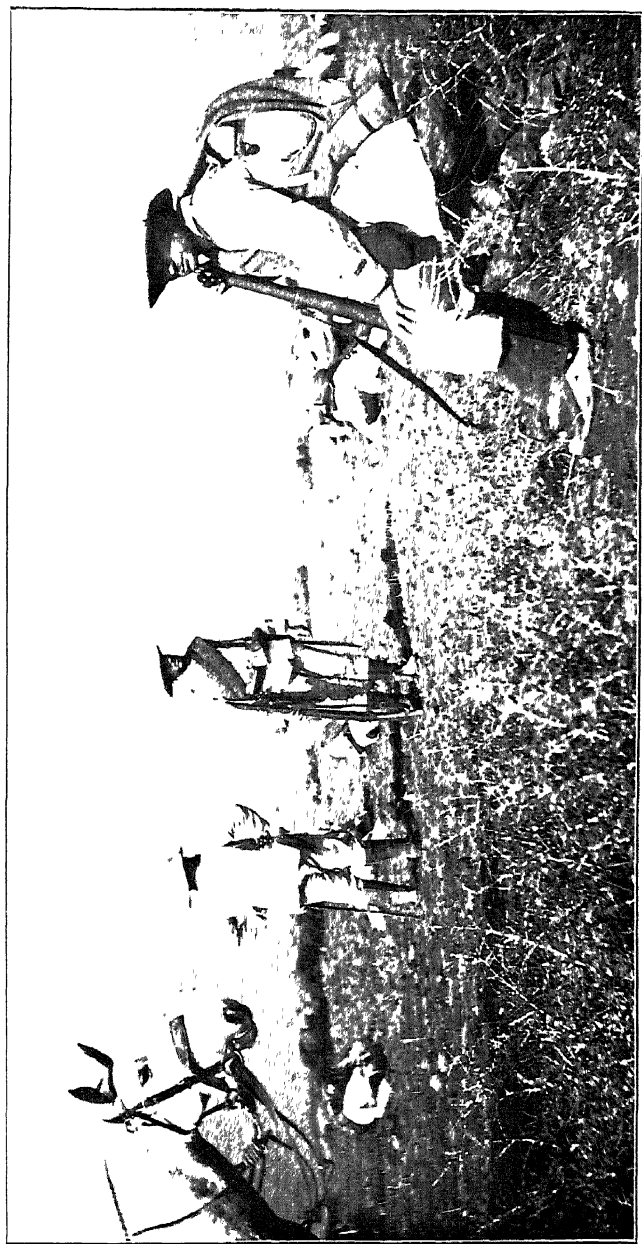
## CHAPTER XXX.

## THE ATTACK ON AKARMAN.

ON the following morning, September 5, Fortescue left for Melilla to carry despatches, leaving Colonel Lewis and myself to establish our camp at Restinga. We selected a beautiful site right on the seashore, and from our tent was only a step to the sea. It was the most pleasant camp I had ever been in. We were free from the sand-storms and the dust thrown up by the passage of troops, and we had the sea-breezes to cool the great heat of the summer sun. That same evening we learned from Bascaran that Aguilera would move out from Zoco del Arbaa on the following morning and endeavour to drive the Moors from Akarman, which he had orders to burn, as well as any other villages or farms he might pass *en route*. This meant an early start for Colonel Lewis and myself, for we both had six or seven kilometres to cover between Restinga and Zoco del Arbaa. In spite of all my best efforts to be up early, our servants were, of course, late, and it was after six before I could make a start. Colonel Lewis was not ready, so I left him behind and cantered over

the soft ground, which made the going very difficult. Long before I reached Zoco del Arbaa I saw the Spanish troops moving out of camp in two columns, each composed of cavalry, infantry, and guns. One moved due south to attack Akarman from the south-east, whilst the other skirted the shore of the Mar Chica, to attack it from the north-west. By the time I reached Zoco del Arbaa both columns were already some distance from the camp, so I had to decide which one I would follow, and chose that which was moving to encircle the villages from the south-east. I quickly overtook the rear-guard, and was stopped by the cavalry patrol; but they allowed me to go after reading my pass. For some time we were unmolested, and were busily engaged in burning the scattered homesteads which are thickly scattered over the fertile plain between Zoco del Arbaa and our objective. I was riding close to one of these, and was about to dismount in order to take a photograph of a farmhouse in flames, when it blew up, dynamite having been placed under the house. From henceforth I was always careful to give a wide berth to anything I saw burning. The centre column was composed of two battalions of the Leon Regiment, two batteries of mountain-guns, and some cavalry. The enemy were very quiet, and allowed us to approach within 500 yards of the village almost without firing a shot. I cannot recommend the formation of the Spanish attack. We approached the village in a long column, with the cavalry massed in front, and covered

by a few patrols, which were much too near the main body to give it adequate protection from sudden attack. The enemy suddenly opened on us from the houses of Akarman, directing an ill-aimed fire at the cavalry. The latter should have at once extended and retired to the flank or rear until their services could be made suitable use of. But instead of this the patrol galloped back, and the whole squadron remained in close formation under a fire which every minute increased in vigour. The infantry were extended, and had a sudden rush been made on the village we might have captured it straight away and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, for the cavalry were in sufficient force and had plenty of time to get round his rear and cut off his retreat. But probably, owing to his instructions, Colonel Santa Coloma displayed no initiative or appreciation of the very happy tactical position in which he was placed. At this point in the engagement a Moor with a Mauser rifle very nearly got me, for I was standing holding my horse in front of the cavalry when he suddenly opened fire from a roof of a house in the village only 200 yards away. Attracted by my white horse, he fired five shots in rapid succession, all of which missed me, but not the cavalry behind. One bullet caught an unfortunate trooper in the ankle, another passed through a horse's leg, and a third went through a soldier's coat without touching him. This caused the cavalry to retire to the rear, and their place was taken by a company of the Leon Regiment, who advanced towards the village beautifully extended,



*Infantry awaiting an attack.*





and with admirable coolness and precision. But they were not allowed to go far before they were halted, and the whole advance was delayed for over an hour. This was a great mistake, and the enemy took advantage of it; for according to their invariable custom, their mounted men rode right round our flank and rear, so that we were fighting on three sides at the same time. But the enemy were not in sufficient force to make these attacks any more than a mere demonstration, and they might well have been ignored. Meantime, while our attack hung fire, the guns and incessant rifle-fire of the other column, led in person by General Aguilera, showed that they were busily engaged in attacking the enemy over the broken ground from the north-west. The Moors, although few in numbers, made a splendid sustained resistance from behind rocks, entrenchments, houses, and the thick cover of the prickly pear. While they were holding Aguilera's column in front, our column should have passed right in rear of the village and cut off his retreat. But nothing so ambitious was attempted; and when the order came to push forward the backbone of his resistance was broken, and we entered the village almost without opposition. Thanks to the thick cover the losses of the enemy were small, and our own were also trifling owing to the bad shooting. In the middle of the village the two columns met, and the first person I encountered was Colonel Lewis, who on arriving at Zoco del Arbaa had hastened after and overtaken Aguilera's column in time to witness the prin-

cipal attack, of which he gave me the following account:—

“I watered my horse rather late on the 6th of September; and as he began to break out when I moved him along, I was not level with Zoco del Arbaa till nearly three quarters of an hour after the troops had left. The right column, under General Aguilera, was marching above the Mar Chica south-west, and was well in sight through my field-glasses; so leaving the camp on my left, I made the best of my way after the General. The going along the shore on the verge between sand and mud was springy and good, so I soon caught up the column. I passed first the second battalion of the Del Rey, then two Schneider field batteries, and then I caught up the first battalion and advance-guard. The Princessa's Hussars were covering the front and left flank. The direction was almost straight towards Zeluan, but Aguilera was making a flank march across his objective—the north-west side of the Akarman line of villages. It was at 7.45 A.M. that groups of the enemy first showed themselves. They were on our front and left flank, but well away from Akarman. A Schneider battery quickly opened fire, and then the advance was continued. At 8 A.M. Coloma's guns were heard from away south-east, and about simultaneously the advance of our columns ceased. Numerous groups of Riffs showed to the left front, and their fire could not be ignored. The cavalry cleared the front, and soon two companies of the Del Rey were in extended order to two fronts. Two dry water-courses ran

down into the Mar Chica within the depth of the column. Under the bank of the most westerly one the leading company of the Del Rey extended facing west, and up the two water-courses the advance of the remainder of the two battalions was finally directed towards our end of Akarman. Two days before a steam-launch belonging to the cruiser *Princesa del Asturias* had been passed over at Restinga from the Mediterranean to the Mar Chica. She carried in her bows a 3-cm. quick-firing Hotchkiss gun, which was useful; for numerous groups were seen ahead of Aguilera's force, and doubtless more would have been attracted from the Zeluan district but for the discouragement which the sister service gave them. A serious concentration of the enemy from that direction would have been inconvenient to the General, for it would have held up his right flank and prevented his timely co-operation with Santa Coloma against Akarman. The infantry advance was quite creditable. As a rule, it was executed by extended sections; but in this broken ground the small columns moving to a flank (so often uselessly employed by the Spaniards over a plain) could be and were usefully employed. The artillery fire was very fair, and was effective against concentrations in gardens and houses; but the infantry fire was much wasted. The Riff was singularly invisible. The day was hazy, and in their light grey robes it was difficult to pick them out even through good Zeiss glasses; but I saw from the top of a reservoir embankment a section fifteen feet

below me firing volleys earnestly by command of their lieutenant over a plain which, I could swear, held no living soul for at least 2000 yards.

“As I was with the head of the column when play began, I remained there for the earlier stages of the fight, and it was quite an interesting section of the field—the 3rd company of the 1st battalion of the Del Rey advanced towards a farm and a line of knolls west of Akarman, their right resting approximately on the western water-course. I followed at a respectful distance up the water-course itself, tied Cyrano up under excellent cover, and crept within 200 yards of the firing-line. The fire was certainly fairly heavy, and the hum of bullets could be heard. This company alone had 3 men killed and 8 wounded. Then I went back to see how the original advanced-guard were faring faced towards Zeluan. The firing-line had moved on several hundred yards, and were lightly engaged with very scattered bodies of the enemy (mostly mounted men), who, however, could not be ignored or they would have embarrassed the right flank of the line attacking Akarman, in spite of the fire from the cruiser’s launch. In the curves of the ground just beyond the water-course were hidden the supports, and of course their left was exposed at long-range to the fire which I have just mentioned. As I rode through the supports I had an amusing illustration of the want of sense of proportion of the Latin whose ears are not inured to the bullet’s hum. An officer ran up to me and said, ‘N’est-ce pas nous étions sous un feu de flanc

terrible, Colonel?' 'Rather heavy,' I replied. 'I hope you haven't had many hit.' There were none. It was the lieutenant's Baptism of Fire."

Once in the village the Spanish soldiers had a splendid time, for good water was found there; prickly pears, olives, and figs grew in abundance, and it was alive with chickens. The advance was not pressed home any further, and the troops prepared to occupy suitable positions for the night, and set to work to burn the village, which was a big task, for it is one of the largest in the neighbourhood. Again I noticed the wild firing at impossible ranges of the Spanish infantry, and also of their Maxim guns. The amount of ammunition expended must have been enormous,—one company of the Del Rey Regiment alone firing 15,000 cartridges. The men were well handled by their company officers, but there was little enterprise displayed in the attack, and a purely frontal movement was made, whereas a flanking movement would have led to far better results. The cavalry were made no use of whatsoever, although the ground was ideal for their employment. Colonel Lewis and myself decided to return to Restinga, and after watering our horses, set out on our lonely ride. We skirted the shore of the Mar Chica, and happily struck a good road, which enabled us to get over the ground quickly, for we were rather afraid we might encounter some lurking bodies of the enemy. But our fears were not realised: the country was deserted, and we reached Zoco del Arbaa without mishap. After a hearty dinner on the cool seashore, we went to Head-

quarters and saw Captain Bascaran, the General's A.D.C. The captain told us that General Marina wished to see us. We went into a room where the General and his staff were at dinner, and met with a most cordial reception, and had coffee and liqueurs with him. The General had only been a spectator of the engagement from Restinga, and was anxious to learn the details of the fight, for, strange to say, no officer had come in with a written report. The only information, and that of a meagre description, had been received by heliograph. The General asked us many details on the fighting, and was most anxious to learn what we thought of the Spanish troops. He begged us to speak freely, and not to hesitate to criticise those points which we considered not perfect. We praised the handling of the troops by their company officers, but told him the fire discipline was bad, and the men were inclined to waste their ammunition at impossible ranges. We also pointed out that the cavalry might have been made better use of, and could have pursued the enemy with advantage. He took our criticisms in very good part, and after remaining for about an hour we returned to camp. Captain Bascaran told us on the quiet that on the following day the First Brigade would continue its forward movement from Akarman, and he advised us to be at that village at an early hour.

Colonel Lewis decided to return to Melilla, and as Fortescue was still in that town I set out alone at an early hour the following morning to rejoin the First Brigade. When I reached the Zoco I

was stopped by the cavalry patrol, but on presenting my pass I was allowed to proceed. I could not see anything of the troops in Akarman, and thought they must have already moved out of the village. I had a lonely ride across the five kilometres separating the Zoco from the village, and even when I got quite close to it I could see no signs of any troops. The disagreeable thought occurred to me that the Spaniards might have evacuated the position, in which case I would be more than likely to find it in the possession of the Moors. Therefore I approached very cautiously, and was greatly relieved to suddenly see a heliograph flashing forth a message from the top of one of the houses. A few minutes later I found myself safely amongst my own friends of the Del Rey Regiment. I met de Bourbon, Vallacerrato, and Zaragoza, all looking very dirty and not a little weary. They told me the night had passed quietly, and that the Moors had not molested the column in any way. The soldiers were busily engaged destroying a well and burning the houses and cutting down the prickly pears. A little later I ran across General Aguilera and his staff. They seemed very surprised to see me, and asked where I had come from. I told them I had but recently returned from Restinga, and they seemed surprised that I had not seen any signs of the enemy. When I told them I had had an interview with General Marina on the previous night, they asked me if by chance I had heard what their orders were to be for that day. I informed them that the General had said he in-



tended to make a further forward movement. A little later their orders arrived by heliograph.

General Aguilera then concentrated his brigade in an open plot in the centre of the village, and the march was resumed towards the south. As soon as we had cleared the village the troops were spread out so as to cover an enormous extent of country. The cavalry, guns, and transport marched in the centre with the infantry on either flank, a distance of three or four kilometres separating the wings. We passed over a splendid, rolling, cultivated plain, dotted with villages and farms, amidst pleasant groves of fig-trees and prickly pears. Each one was visited in turn by detachments of infantry or cavalry and set on fire, whilst the engineers placed dynamite cartridges under the houses, leaving fuses to explode them after the troops had left. In a few hours this beautiful smiling country was nothing but a mass of smoking hamlets, and looked as if some great veldt fire had broken out. This work of destruction was very uncongenial to the Spaniards, and on all sides I heard expressions of regret that the exigencies of war should render it essential: it is, however, part of the price which barbarism pays for the blessing of civilisation, and the same story has been repeated the world over. We found it necessary in South Africa, and the Spaniards found it just as necessary in Morocco. During this operation not a Moor was to be seen, and not a shot was fired, and it appeared as if the inhabitants had fled in the direction of Zeluan after the fight of the 6th. At 11 A.M. we were surprised by two

Moors, who approached on foot, carrying a white flag stuck on a rifle. They were brought in by cavalry and interrogated by the General, and the column halted. After a short discussion they left and speedily returned with sixteen others, all fully armed with Remington rifles, whilst one led a cow as a peace-offering. They were splendid men, and bore themselves with a dignity which commanded the admiration of the Spaniards. Their rifles were thrown in a heap and terms arranged. The Spaniards conducted the war with the utmost humanity, for after a short parley all were allowed to depart, and their village was spared on their promising not to fight again. Then the brigade moved eastwards towards the sea-coast, meeting other Moors, all of whom carried white flags and surrendered. Our objective was now the village of Moulai el Sherif, which, after having surrendered on the 4th of August, treacherously fired on our rear-guard. Every precaution was adopted to prevent surprise, but on arriving before the village we found white flags flying from every housetop, and the inhabitants, men, women, and children, tending their herds. The Caids came out to try and make their peace and to ask forgiveness, although, by all the laws of war, they deserved to have their houses burnt and themselves made prisoners. However, the Spaniards displayed great magnanimity, and terms of peace were arrived at. The General then rode through the village, which is a very large one, and selected a suitable site for camp for the night. As I had no transport and no food, having only come out

for the day, I decided to return to Zoco del Arbaa. I had about nine kilometres to cover, but I hoped, by keeping close to the seashore, that I should thus avoid any lurking bodies of the enemy who might be in the neighbourhood. General Aguilera gave me permission to go at my own risk ; and after collecting many letters for the post from my friends in the Del Rey Regiment, I set off. I had a very quiet ride, keeping on the high ground, from which I could obtain a good look-out, but I saw not a sign of the enemy. In fact, the countryside seemed to be entirely deserted, and it was not until I was within a mile of Zoco del Arbaa that I encountered the first Spanish vedettes. They evidently mistook me for a Moor, and were somewhat surprised when I rode into camp. I found Zoco del Arbaa in a state of considerable excitement, for General Marina and his staff had ridden out from Restinga, and were anxiously awaiting news of Aguilera's Brigade, of which nothing had been seen since the morning. I was at once conducted to General Orosko, whose chief of staff cross-examined me as to what had taken place, and particularly as to whether Aguilera had burnt the village of Moulai el Sherif. When I replied that he had not, and had come to terms with the tribesmen, there seemed to be considerable annoyance amongst the staff officers ; and Orosko immediately rode off to join General Marina, who was outside the camp with his staff, telling me to follow him, as the General wished to see me. They travelled at a great pace across country, and my unfortunate horse was so weary he

could hardly keep up. The whole cavalcade, consisting of the staff of the two Generals and their escort, then proceeded in the direction of Moulai el Sherif. I followed for some little way, and then, finding my presence had been forgotten, or that I was not needed, I decided to turn back and ride once more to Restinga, which I reached about eight o'clock, having covered nearly sixty kilometres during the day. I must relate one curious fact, that on my going over the ground which General Marina's escort had travelled at a trot, I had picked up no less than three perfectly new nosebags, which seemed to show that they had not been adjusted properly, or that the escort had left in such a hurry that they had gone on parade improperly dressed. These nosebags were a welcome addition to our saddlery.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

## THE EXPEDITION AGAINST THE BENI-SICAR.

ON September 20 the operations were resumed, and a force, led by General Marina in person, penetrated into the territory of the Beni-Sicar, whose loyalty had long been under suspicion. The Beni-Sicar are the tribes who live to the north-west of Mount Gurugu, and their territory is separated from that mountain by the Rio de Oro, which is a fair-sized river during the rainy season, but is only a dried-up water-course in the summer. Some of the villages of the Beni-Sicar in the valley of the Rio de Oro actually touch Melilla, and are commanded by the guns of the fort. During the campaign the villagers had professed friendship to Spain, and were allowed free ingress into the town. Large numbers of them were daily to be seen selling their market produce, and their Caids were frequent visitors at Headquarters, apparently willing to supply the Spaniards with any assistance or information they possessed. But these pretensions of loyalty were mingled with considerable suspicion of their conduct. Numbers of armed

warriors were daily seen proceeding up the north-western slopes of Mount Gurugu ; and it was freely reported that they spent their days in the dark gorges of that mountain, sniping at the advanced Spanish positions, or at the convoys passing at their feet. It is surprising the amount of trust that the Spanish Headquarters' staff repose in them. It seemed only natural and obvious that the Beni-Sicar must be in full sympathy with their comrades, and it is difficult to understand why they were allowed to play their dual rôle so long unpunished. Finally a little incident led to the complete rupture of friendly relations. Two young Spanish officers, tired of life in Melilla, which possessed but few attractions, made friends with some of the Beni-Sicar tribesmen, who arranged to take them to one of the villages with the intention, rumour says, of introducing them to some charming Beni-Sicar ladies. The expedition came off, but when they reached the village the officers, instead of receiving the friendly introduction into the Moorish household which they were led to believe awaited them, were forcibly seized by a band of warriors, and after being stripped of their swords, revolvers, and uniform, were sent back to the Spanish line in a state which would have been extremely uncomfortable had the weather been anything but tropical. This insult, although brought about by the reckless indiscretion of exuberant youth, could not be overlooked by Spain. Time was given for the Caids of the Beni-Sicar to come in and make honourable amends for their scandalous conduct, and an

ultimatum was sent them that unless they surrendered by a particular date they must expect to receive the most condign punishment. But the Beni-Sicar, having lived for so long under the muzzles of the guns, were not to be frightened by the prospect of a parade of Spanish military power in their territory, for they believed that General Marina was too occupied elsewhere to spare a force to punish them. In this they were mistaken.

Great preparations were made to render the expedition a complete success. For a week before the date of the advance, rumours were flying round, visiting the cafés, penetrating the camps, and leaving a different impression as to the actual facts in the minds of 40,000 gallant warriors. But on the morning of September 19 we learned for certain that an advance would take place on the following day. Lieutenant Gibbs, whom I have already mentioned, told me that he had received three days' rations, consisting of hard biscuits and sardines, and instructions to hold himself in readiness for immediate advance. On the afternoon of the 19th I visited his battalion—that of the dashing Colonel Burgeyte,—and I met Gibbs arrayed in full marching order, sweating profusely, and in an extremely bad temper. He was cursing Spain and her military system. He told me that that afternoon he and his gallant comrades had been out on the parade-ground for three hours. First they thought they were going to advance that very day, and all donned their heavy burdens with the speed and en-

thusiasm that is only begot by the anticipation of a speedy encounter with the enemy. They waited for two hours in the hot sun without anything happening, but bearing their sixty odd pounds of kit lightly and jauntily. They were then informed that the day's work was merely to consist of an inspection by their brigadier. But no brigadier turned up, and at the expiration of two hours and a half the inevitable cinematograph made its appearance, and Gibbs and his gallant comrades for the next hour were made to disport themselves before it, in order that the Spanish public might have a true and graphic account, both in the theatres and in the next week's issue of the illustrated papers, of what they would do once the enemy were actually in the field. They advanced to the attack in skirmishing order; the firing-line was reinforced, and bayonets were fixed. At the critical moment, when a decisive range was reached—from the cinematograph,—the officers drew their swords, the men fixed their rusty bayonets, and with deafening *vivas* the battalion, led by the gallant Burgeyte, sped down upon this accurate recorder of heroism in war.

No wonder, then, when I met Gibbs, who had left his country's service through that love of fighting which has carried the Anglo-Saxon race so far, he felt a little aggrieved that he should be called upon to provide a turn in an Iberian music-hall. However, he told me the whole of General Tovar's Division had received orders to hold themselves in readiness for an advance on the following



day. Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself made our preparations accordingly. Owing to the difficult nature of the country, it was impossible to take a cart with us, and we loaded up my mule with enough provisions, wine, cigars, and soda-water to keep us in a state of moderate comfort for at least three days. There is no occasion in which you go to bed in such spirits as when you know that you are almost certain to have a good fight on the following morning. The anticipation of an exciting event is often more pleasant than the event itself, for in anticipation disappointment finds no place, whereas the event, dependent on human actions, and not on the imagination, often fails to bear out the high promise of the former. The Anglo-Saxon race has always been prone to a carouse before a combat, and we held a farewell dinner, to which we invited many of our old friends and comrades, in order not to depart from the time-honoured custom which, according to the historian, was the cause of our downfall at the battle of Senlac, but which, on the other hand, also played a very prominent part on the evening of the great triumph of Waterloo. We sat up to a late hour drinking toasts, and picturing to ourselves the glorious events of the following day. At midnight, having completed our last preparation, we returned to snatch a few hours' rest. At 3 A.M. the beautiful Spanish trumpets blew out a reveille which was to be the last for many gallant officers and men. We aroused ourselves, considerably subdued, and feeling but little of the elation and enthusiasm of the evening before. But a

cup of coffee, a few boiled eggs, an early morning cigar, and a breath of fresh air, soon revived our drooping spirits. At 4 A.M. the ever-wakeful Paco arrived with our horses. They also seemed to scent the battle from afar, and, like ourselves, were in the highest spirits. Hard work, and a week's rest, had put them in the pink of condition. The Colonel's little chestnut stallion was carrying his saddle like a Derby winner. Fortescue's splendid Arab, Mouro, was kicking everybody who came in sight, and snorting with delight as the long line of transport-mules swept by; while my Algerian barb, Blanco, was surveying the scene with his customary stoicism, and indulging from time to time in a farewell snooze. Who could have thought that in less than three hours two out of our three horses would be dead and their masters painfully trudging over the stony hills and valleys of the inhospitable Beni-Sicar! Melilla was astir. On all sides infantry, cavalry, guns, and transport were pouring up the sandy slopes which give access to the Beni-Sicar territory. Staff officers and orderlies were galloping from column to column conveying orders, directing the march, rectifying the distances, and placing the batteries in position. Crowds of townspeople were following the troops, whilst the women and children waved their hands or shouted encouraging farewells from the windows. We rode past the camp of Tovar and Sotomayor's Divisions—the former deserted, whilst the troops of the latter stood by their tents and cheered their comrades. On the plateau embraced by the forts, the whole

of the force was assembled. The infantry and cavalry continued their slow march in one long column, whilst the two batteries of Schneider guns had their muzzles trained on the Beni-Sicar villages at our feet. The latter seemed quite unaware of their impending doom. The women were already at work in the fields, the children were minding the flocks or playing round the houses, and a few mounted warriors were riding to and fro, apparently but little interested in the bustle and stir that was taking place above them. Their apathy received a rough awakening. At exactly ten minutes to seven one of the great guns on Fort Camillos boomed forth, sending a great balloon of white smoke into the cool morning air. Every one present watched where the shell was going to burst, and a general cry of surprise arose when it was seen to explode right in the midst of the houses 2000 yards away. This gun was the signal for all the others to open fire, and the field artillery followed suit. In less time than it takes to write this peaceful, pastoral scene was transformed into a smoky, fiery furnace, from the midst of which great fragments of steel and iron and clouds of shrapnel burst forth. The scene in the village beggars description. The women left the fields, the children rushed to gain their mother's side, and the warriors, many of whom were peacefully asleep in their huts, rushed forth, rifles in hand, to meet this sudden attack. But they were caught in a trap. To the south they could only ascend at a slow pace the rugged slopes of the Gurugu, fully exposed to a rain of shells ; behind

them lay the open valley of the Rio de Oro, to the north the hills which the Spanish infantry were hastening to occupy, and to the east the high road which led to Melilla. At first this sudden bombardment of women and children seemed brutal and unjustifiable, but after a short examination as to where the Spanish shells were bursting, it became obvious to every one that they were sent to frighten and not to hurt. The gunners of all the batteries had received careful instructions not to fire on the inhabitants of the villages, but to drop their shells all around them, leaving a safety-zone on the road which led to Melilla. The Beni-Sicar were quick to discover this, and soon many hundreds of women and children, and a fair number of armed men, were hastening down the road in the direction of the town. Mothers could be seen clasping their infants to their breasts, and dragging behind them those who were old enough to walk. Occasionally, feminine instincts overcoming their fear, they would rush back into their houses to fetch some article of apparel or treasured keepsake. Some drove before them a favourite cow, a sheep, or a horse; but those who lingered too long were reminded by a well-aimed shell bursting in their neighbourhood that their only true road to safety lay towards Melilla. Twenty minutes after the bombardment had commenced, at least a thousand men, women, and children were making their way towards the town to seek the shelter of the Spanish lines. But many of the warriors, disdaining to surrender without a fight, hastened to gain the open country behind them by escaping

up the valley of the Rio de Oro. On these the field-guns concentrated their fire, but the shooting on rapidly-moving objects was extraordinarily bad, and but few casualties were suffered.

Meanwhile the two brigades of Alfau and Morales were making their way steadily through the hills to the north-west, their object being to cross the Guelaia Peninsula and to entirely cut off the territory of the Beni-Sicar from the Gurugu. It was now about 8 A.M. Colonel Lewis and Fortescue suggested that we should join the infantry, as the centre of interest was now likely to be there. I agreed to this proposal; but having lost sight of our precious mule with all our provisions, and fearing it would go astray amongst the mass of troops, I said I would ride back and find and direct the muleteer as to where he was to go, and afterwards rejoin my friends. So we parted, and were not destined to meet again until three hours later, under somewhat dramatic circumstances. I found our muleteer, and after placing him with a reserve ammunition supply, with strict instructions not to leave it under any circumstances, I rode after the main body of the infantry and quickly overtook them. The country through which we passed was bare, almost waterless, and devoid of any cultivation except in the neighbourhood of a few scattered homesteads. The hills are volcanic in their origin. The surface is broken and rocky, and the deep valleys and dry water-courses render them impassable for mounted men and guns. Mountaineers could not wish for a better country, providing as it does excellent

cover and facilities for sudden surprises. But the Spanish troops, fully ten thousand in number, moved forward almost unmolested. At the top of some high ground General Marina and his staff took up their position to direct the operations. The two brigades here separated : that of General Morales moved westwards towards some villages round which the enemy could be seen gathering, whilst that of General Alfau moved almost due north. As I had been detained, I did not arrive until General Morales's Brigade was already some distance on its way, and I therefore followed that of General Alfau. Passing down the ranks, I speedily came across Gibbs, and conveyed to him the not uncheerful news that I had a mule in the neighbourhood laden with most of the luxuries of the canning trade. His battalion was halted in close formation when the enemy on some hills a short distance to our north opened fire. Burgeyte received orders to clear them out, and I was quickly separated from Gibbs, who advanced in the firing-line to the attack. Meanwhile, General Morales's Brigade to the west had become vigorously engaged, and there was a continuous roar of rifle-fire mingled with that of the mountain-guns. General Alfau, however, met with practically no resistance. The enemy in his quarter were completely cut off from all retreat, having the sea on two sides of the triangle in which they were held, with the whole brigade of Spanish troops as its base. After firing a few shots they gave in, and in a very short time, according to what Gibbs subsequently told me, they were

busily engaged in selling grapes to, and fetching water for, their thirsty conquerors. I was with some Spanish infantry, and as it was now eleven o'clock, and I had had nothing to eat since 4 A.M., I decided to have some lunch, as not only had the firing ceased to the north, but the Spanish troops were also in the possession of the village of Taxdirt, which they gained after a very spiritless resistance on the part of the enemy. I had just sat down behind a company of Spanish infantry when I suddenly saw a snake about six feet long advancing stealthily towards an unfortunate Spanish soldier, who was quite unaware of his danger. I jumped up, gave a shout which startled the whole company, and fairly kicked the soldier off the ground. He sprang up, and naturally resented this sudden onslaught, but his anger gave way to gratitude when he realised the danger which he had escaped. The snake then commenced a furious onslaught on the whole company, who, fixing their bayonets, or clubbing their rifles, returned the attack with such vigour that in a few minutes the snake was impaled.

At about eleven-thirty I saw the Spanish infantry in Taxdirt preparing to advance over some open ground to attack a long ridge of hills which ran right across their front from the Rio de Oro to the sea. As there was nothing doing in this part of the field, I mounted my horse, and, slipping down a friendly valley, I gained Taxdirt in about half an hour's ride, after thinking myself completely lost. During the whole of the morning I had seen nothing of

Lewis and Fortescue, and expected to find them with this column; but the ground was so broken up by houses and gardens that my search was futile, and the situation speedily became so interesting in front that I had no time to think further of their safety. It now became evident we were in for a severe engagement, and that the enemy, with the well-known strategical skill of the Moors, had selected their own ground and their own time for fighting. Right across our front lay this ridge of hills, almost devoid of cover from artillery fire, but offering not a scrap of dead ground for infantry in attack. The Spanish troops on leaving the shelter of Taxdirt had to descend the gentle slope to the bottom of the valley, and then mount to the farther side. The enemy had gathered to the number of about two or three thousand along this ridge, and it was now a straightforward frontal attack on a strong position. Large numbers of the Moors were armed with old-fashioned muskets, which rendered them a negligible quantity except at close quarters, but there were sufficient with Mausers and Remingtons to give the Spaniards a very warm time. The regiment of Catalonia advanced from Taxdirt under the cover of a heavy fire from the mountain-guns, which swept the slope and drove the enemy from the crest. The Catalonia battalion advanced to the attack in a very open formation, with absolutely no supports, for the other battalions of the brigade were far in the rear. Thanks to the heavy shell-fire at close range, the troops gained the crest with but little loss, but had they been



charged by a determined body of the enemy, the line must have been broken. But once they gained the crest the enemy were able to compete with them on more even terms ; for the ridge does not slope down on the reverse side, but stretches out in a sandy plateau on parts of which there is good cover from shrubs and hillocks. Thus the Spanish troops commenced to suffer many casualties, and the mountain-guns were pushed forward almost to the firing-line to keep down their heavy rifle-fire. A squadron of Alfonso XIII., the only cavalry in this part of the field, were pushed forward to the bottom of the valley, where they were under cover, and from which point they could conveniently support the firing-line, although it was hardly the duty of cavalry. At this juncture I saw the most curious military operation carried out in the face of the enemy, and one which cannot be recommended as a tactical success : on this occasion it very nearly led to a serious disaster. General Morales thought that the Catalanian battalion, which had suffered moderate casualties, had been in the firing-line long enough : he therefore decided to replace them by the Tarifa battalion, with the Talavera in echelon to their right rear. Now, no general is justified in retiring his troops in the face of the enemy, as long as he is maintaining his resistance, and even inclined to be aggressive. Let him reinforce his firing-line as much as he likes, so as to strengthen its *morale* and to add volume to its diminishing fire ; but the moral consequences of retiring a regiment, under such circumstances, is very bad

not only to those who are retiring, but still more to those, especially when they are composed for the most part of young soldiers, who are advancing to take its place. There is nothing more difficult than to retire troops calmly under fire, and on this occasion, as was only natural, those who were retreating moved too quickly, while those who were advancing to take their place were too slow. Thus there came a time when the ridge, which had just been won, was almost denuded of troops, and the Moors, taking full advantage of their opportunity, rushed to reoccupy it, pressing forward our right flank, where the hill curves inwards, and where they could enfilade the whole valley, placing the guns, the supporting cavalry, the ammunition reserves, and the advancing Tarifa battalion under a very heavy fire. I rode down and joined the cavalry just at the moment when this retirement took place. We were speedily under a very heavy fire, and the air seemed alive with Mauser bullets. The cavalry were massed together, and speedily suffered several casualties. Finding they were a mark for the enemy's riflemen, I left them, and dismounting, sat down amongst the reserve ammunition-mules of the mountain-guns. But here we were little better off, and as the balls were dropping in amongst us in a most unpleasant manner, the officer in command gave a rash order for the men to disperse. He only meant that they should spread out so as to minimise the risk of casualties ; but naturally many of the men, once they had got on the run, were not much inclined

to stop, and hurried back towards the friendly shelter of Taxdirt. The centre of the ridge was now in the possession of about a thousand Moors, amongst whom were boys of ten years of age, all full of fight and elated with success. Something had to be done to save the situation, and it fell to the lot of the squadron of cavalry. The latter—under Captain Cavalcante, formerly Military Attaché in Rome,—stung by the fire, trotted up the hillside, and when they reached the crest, charged the Moors. They got right in amongst them, and every officer and man used his sabre amongst the enemy. They passed through them once, then turned and came through them a second time, inflicting very heavy losses and effectively checking their advance, and gaining time for the Tarifa battalion to reach the crest and reoccupy the firing-line. But this charge was attended by heavy losses. Seven men were killed outright, eleven wounded, and many horses were rendered *hors de combat* out of a total of sixty-five. The sabres of the troopers bore excellent testimony to the good work they had done. They were nearly all broken in half from contact with the tough hides of the Moors, and all were covered with blood, showing how the charge had been pressed home. The scene, after this successful attack, was a remarkable one, for the horses of the dead and wounded bolted back down the hillside towards Taxdirt, pursued by mounted troopers, and at first it looked as if the cavalry had been routed. It was some time before the horses could be caught. A trooper told me he

was obliged to kill a boy of twelve years of age who seized a rifle from the hands of one of the dead Spaniards. Four of the seven men killed in the charge were left in the hands of the enemy, but the wounded were safely brought in by the stretcher-bearers of the advancing Tarifa battalion.

I witnessed the charge from the outskirts of Taxdirt, to which point I had retired for some shelter from the rain of bullets which was sweeping the valley. But even here it was pretty lively, especially when the fighting recommenced on the crest of the ridge, for the bullets passed right over the valley and fell amongst the reserve troops, transport, and artillery. A stream of wounded men were now coming back from the firing-line, and I met one young officer, the adjutant of the Catalonia battalion, riding a horse so complacently that I could not tell he had been hit until he asked me for some water. I had none on me, but managed to borrow a cupful from a soldier who was leading one of the water-mules. The officer then told me he had been hit in the stomach, but he did not think the ball had penetrated very far. All the wounded and dead were brought into a farmhouse in Taxdirt, and there attended to. It was now about one o'clock, and during the whole of the morning I had seen nothing of either Fortescue or Lewis, and was beginning to wonder what had become of them, when I suddenly saw Fortescue, looking extremely weary and woe-begone, approaching on foot. I had hardly greeted him when I heard a familiar voice in the distance, which I immediately recognised as that of Colonel Lewis,

saying, "Well, I consider a war-correspondent without a horse is much better dead." A moment later the Colonel joined us, and my two friends proceeded to relate to me the strange adventures that had befallen them since we parted company three or four hours before. They rode to overtake the Spanish infantry, whom they imagined would advance directly across the hills overlooking the Rio de Oro from the north. But as a matter of fact the Spanish army made a much wider sweep, and left the ground over which my two friends advanced unoccupied. What happened was this: most of the Moors from the Beni-Sicar villages, who did not seek the shelter of Melilla itself, escaped up these hills, chosen by my companions for their promenade, with the intention of attacking the Spanish troops on their left flank as they advanced across the peninsula. Their first encounter with the enemy was dramatic. They had halted on seeing a party of about twelve dismounted Moors three or four hundred yards away from them. The Colonel, who is somewhat shortsighted, said to Fortescue, "Oh yes, those are undoubtedly Moors: but they are probably coming to surrender, as none of them are carrying rifles; as far as I can see, they only have umbrellas." The Colonel could not see quite far enough, for the next moment the whole twelve fired in a volley which sent the bullets whistling about their ears, but fortunately doing no further harm. They did not wait for a second, but galloped off across country to rejoin the Spanish troops, who could be seen advancing on the right.

But their adventures for the day were not yet over. After riding for some distance they espied a kraal, which they entered, and from which they had an excellent view of the Spanish advance. They now imagined they were in the centre of the Spanish line, and were therefore perfectly safe. They dismounted, stood by their horses, and eagerly watched the Spanish troops drive out the enemy from Taxdirt and prepare for the attack on the main ridge. In reality they were still outside the extreme left flank of General Morales's Brigade. Another party of Moors, about twenty strong, who had also escaped from the bombarded villages, crept quietly up the hillside and suddenly poured in a volley upon them at a distance of only sixty yards. Fortescue's horse, Mouro, gave a tremendous jump in the air and fell stone dead,—shot apparently through the heart. He undoubtedly saved Fortescue's life, as he was standing on the reverse side of him. The Colonel's horse was also hit, and jumping over the wall of the kraal, he ran straight back towards the enemy and was never seen again: he is now either dead or the pride of some Beni-Sicar brave. Colonel Lewis and Fortescue jumped over the reverse slope of the kraal to run back for safety, when they found they were the chosen target of a company of Spanish infantry who had sighted the Moors, and who were advancing to attack them. They mistook my two friends for the enemy, and concentrated their fire on them. Colonel Lewis ran straight back on the Spanish company, calling out to them to cease fire, and, escaping all the bullets,

finally flung himself down in the firing-line. Fortescue, on the other hand, thought it best to remain where he was, and fell flat on his back alongside the wall, calling out in Spanish, "For God's sake, cease firing at me!" But the Spanish troops, excited by the action, did not grasp at first they were firing on a friend; and Fortescue told me their bullets hit the wall above him like hailstones on a window. Finally, the officer in command realised his mistake, and the "Cease fire" was sounded. The Spanish officers and men could not do enough for my two friends when they discovered their mistake. It can therefore be understood that we were a sorry trio when we found ourselves reunited in Taxdirt, with but one horse amongst the three of us. We had to arrange a new plan of campaign, for it was obvious that the Colonel and Fortescue could not remain with the troops on foot, and there was no alternative but for them to return to Melilla. Our transport-mule was miles away with the other brigade to the north, and I gave up all hope of finding him again that day.

Meanwhile the fighting had broken out with renewed fury on the ridge, especially on our right flank, where the Moors rushed the Tarifa battalion which formed a square, and finally succeeded in driving them off with very heavy losses on both sides. General Tovar, the commander of the Division, was in the thick of the fighting, and his son, his aide-de-camp, was severely wounded by his side. Finally, the General decided not to attempt to hold the extended ridge for the night,

but to retire to the village of Taxdirt, which offered very strong possibilities of defence. The troops were then withdrawn, and took up their positions for the night. Meanwhile Colonel Lewis, Fortescue, and myself, with our sole surviving steed, were making our way painfully and laboriously across country to try and find our way back to Melilla. I knew the road over which I had come, and we speedily regained a point of safety. Here I left the others and rode off to try and find the muleteer, but failing to do so I left him to his fate, and rode back to the town. On my way I met some battalions of Sotomayor's Division which had been sent out of camp as a reinforcement, but their services were not required. We were all glad to reach Melilla, and to sit down to an excellent dinner at the hotel.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

## CONTINUATION OF THE OPERATIONS.

ON the following morning I rode out alone to rejoin the Spanish army, as we all expected a further immediate advance to push home the success of the previous day. Lewis and Fortescue remained in the town. They expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with what they had already seen, and as neither of them had horses it was impossible for them to take the field. When I reached the high ground I could see no stir amongst the Spanish troops in Taxdirt, and it certainly did not look as if they intended to make a further advance that day. A little later, much to my delight, I met my muleteer with his precious charge. He seemed equally pleased to see me, and explained by a series of expressive signs how he had searched for us all the previous evening, and had finally camped with the troops for the night. I found all the stores and all the wine intact, and rewarded his fidelity with a good meal and a bottle of Spanish Rioja. A little farther on I ran across the Headquarter staff, and had a talk with Bascaran. He told me that no further

advance would be made that day, as there was too much work to be done bringing in the wounded over the difficult ground : it required eight stretcher-bearers for every wounded or dead man, and over 1500 men had been set aside for this purpose. I therefore camped by the Headquarters' Staff, and had lunch. A little later the long and dismal procession of wounded men began to defile slowly past. At this time the total casualties were uncertain, but they were reported to number about two hundred killed and wounded, and the whole of this loss had fallen on General Morales's Brigade. In the afternoon I left the Headquarters and rode across to Taxdirt. I found the troops occupying the same position. There was much grumbling owing to the scarcity and bad quality of the water-supply ; but it must be confessed that the Spaniards do not take careful steps to safeguard their water, and were largely to blame themselves for the consequences,—but on this subject I shall have more to say later. The troops had passed a quiet night in the village, for the enemy were so demoralised by the previous day's fighting that they made no effort to molest the brigade. I visited the camp of the Alfonso XIII., and had a talk with the officers who had taken part in the charge ; and I examined the sabres of the troopers, which were still covered with blood, and many of which had broken in the centre as they were withdrawn from the bodies of the enemy. As there was to be no advance that day, and no one seemed very certain if it would take place on the next, I decided to return to Melilla, as I

wished to send off despatches. I left my muleteer at Headquarters, with strict orders to remain there until I rejoined him on the following morning.

At an early hour I was once more in the saddle, and on the road to the front. I reached Headquarters about 9 A.M., and found the General and his staff peacefully breakfasting, but Bascaran told me they were going to advance shortly after eleven, when the troops had lunched. The operations were planned on a grand scale. Sotomayor's Division was to march out of Melilla, creep along the south bank of the Rio de Oro, and occupy the lower slopes of Gurugu, and finally endeavour to take the Zoco del Beni-Sicar. Tovar's Division was to leave Taxdirt and to march due west until it struck the coast, and thus make a complete sweep of the peninsula. It was hoped that Sotomayor's Division would drive the Moors back on Tovar or *vice versa*, Tovar's advance would force them into the arms of Sotomayor, and thus they would be caught between two fires. At first sight this plan of operations seemed to be an excellent one, but in reality it offered very little hope of obtaining the desired results, because it was on much too local a scale. The Guelaia Peninsula broadens out towards the west, and the Moors, if hard pressed, could avoid Gurugu and Sotomayor, and escape across the Rio de Oro into the friendly territory of the Beni Said, and by making a detour regain the mountains from the south-west. This is in fact exactly what happened. Had General Marina but possessed more enterprise, and had the Spanish troops been more

mobile, it might have led to decisive results. But Sotomayor's Division was despatched two days too late. Had it advanced on the 20th and swept aside the feeble opposition, it would have caught the enemy, heavily engaged with Tovar's Division, right in the rear, and they must have been annihilated or hopelessly dispersed. As it was, the operations of the 22nd partook of the character of a great military parade,—very fine to look at, very interesting to watch, but it quite failed to bring the enemy to a decisive engagement.

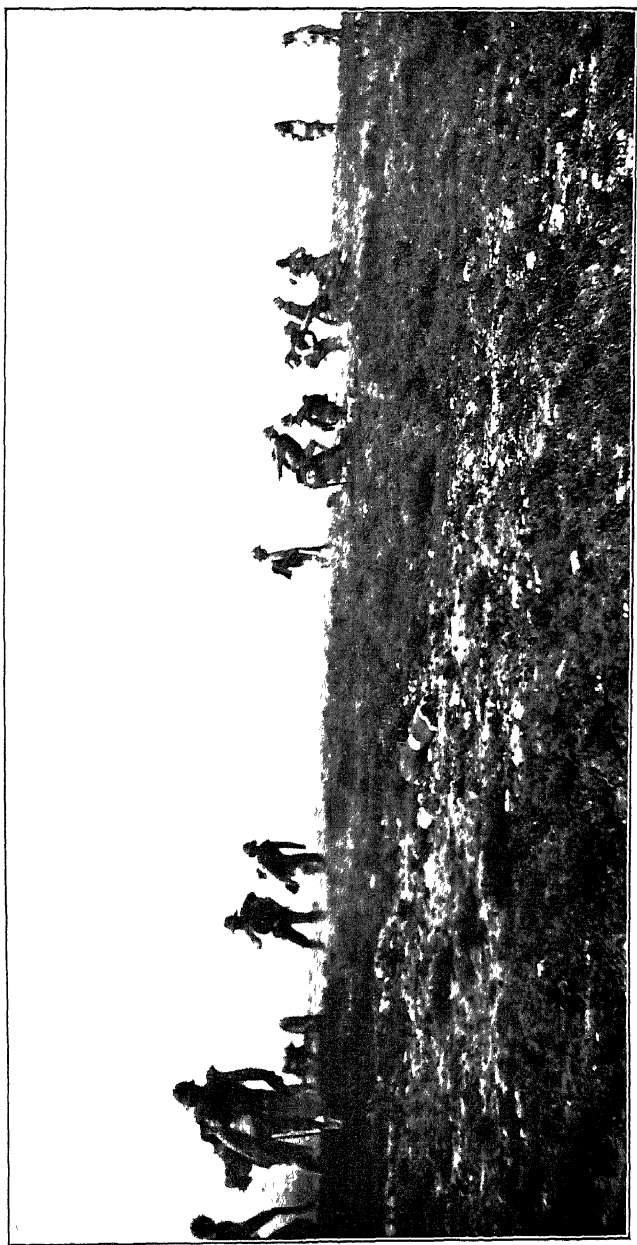
Shortly before eleven I rejoined Tovar in Tax-dirt. The men were busily engaged preparing their dinners previous to advancing. The day's rest had freshened them up, and they were in the highest spirits. At 11.30 A.M. the troops fell in, and the infantry advanced once more to the attack of the sombre ridge which had been the scene of the severe fighting two days before. But on this occasion we moved more to the right, so as to take advantage of the high ground overlooking the sea from which the guns could enfilade the crest. The troops left camp uttering deafening shouts of "Viva España" as they swept by General Tovar. I was riding along when I came across the body of a young Spanish soldier who had evidently been killed, or apparently wounded and forgotten, in the previous fighting. The brutal Moors had cut him open with knives, and he lay on the ground with a look of extreme horror on his face,—not a cheerful spectacle to troops about to advance to the

attack. The brigade had hardly cleared the camp when the enemy, many hundreds strong, appeared on the crest of the ridge. The mountain-guns were placed in position, and opened up a heavy fire, but the shells all fell short; and this waste of ammunition continued for some time until it was checked by the arrival of Tovar in person, who ordered the guns to move forward to a commanding ridge. The Spanish mountain-guns were of very poor quality, old-fashioned Schneiders, which run back many yards after every shot, and are extremely difficult to aim with. In addition to this, they were very old, most of them having been employed in Cuba, and the rifling had worn out; and I never saw more execrable shooting than that which they made on this morning. The premature explosions were very frequent, and as I was standing with the cavalry and infantry three hundred yards in front of the guns, one of these burst right over our heads. The cavalry moved to one side, and I did not hesitate to follow their example. The next shell burst among the infantry, wounding three men, and the day thus opened disastrously. Even when the guns were brought forward the shooting was equally bad, and the wheels frequently fell off their carriages after a shot had been fired. Meanwhile the cavalry went forward to reconnoitre, but retired at a gallop when the enemy opened fire from the crest of the ridge, and the infantry were sent forward to the attack, but not without supports as on the previous day. The firing-line was more dense, and a hundred

yards behind it half companies of infantry followed in column, so as to meet any sudden rush. I could see so many Moors lying in a ridge, that I thought we were in for a harder fight than that of the 20th; but either the Beni-Sicar had had enough, or, what is more probable, they were short of ammunition, and they offered hardly any resistance. It was only after we reached the crest that they kept up a desultory fire, and at 12.30 Tovar's Division, minus two battalions of Alfau's Brigade, which were left to keep order in the north of the Guelaia Peninsula, was assembled on or behind the ridge astride the peninsula from east to west. Here we halted for a short time, and search was made for the bodies of the men who had fallen in the cavalry charge. We found these lying close together, intermingled with several dead Moors. They had been stripped of all clothing and mutilated. They were taken to the rear and there buried.

Having halted for half an hour, Tovar's Division turned south towards the Rio de Oro, moving along the ridge which had cost it so dear. We left one battalion on the high ground near the seashore to prevent the enemy from returning and reoccupying it if he felt so inclined, but all the fighting appeared to have been knocked out of him for the time being, and he seemed bent on retreating. A short march of three-quarters of an hour brought us to a hill overlooking the Rio de Oro, and the whole panorama of its valley and of the open country towards the west lay exposed to view. On the other side of the river Sotomayor's

Division was just taking up its ground for the night, the two divisions arriving at their appointed places at exactly the same moment, and presenting a very fine military spectacle, but one which obtained very little practical result. We thought the day's work was now at an end; but this was not the case, for the only road open to the Moors, who had opposed us in the morning, lay across the plain towards the south-west, right at our feet. Small groups of the enemy soon made their appearance, mostly on foot, widely scattered to avoid the shell-fire which was immediately opened up on them. Unfortunately, Tovar had none of the quick-firing Schneider guns with him, but he got his three mounted batteries into position, and plastered the retiring enemy with a tremendous shrapnel-fire, which lasted over half an hour, and was by far and away the heaviest seen during the campaign. It was a fine sight,—eighteen guns in action, blazing away for all they were worth, until the ground in front was hidden by a great cloud of smoke and sand and the retreating enemy rendered invisible. But this made no difference: the Spanish gunners did not bother to wait for the smoke to clear away, but continued to fire as fast as they could place a shell in the breech and pull the lanyard. The bombardment was more comic than serious. The premature explosions were appallingly frequent, but as we had no infantry out in front this did not matter. The whole of the infantry were engaged in looking on at the gunners and urging them to still further exertion, and the firing only ceased through lack of ammunition. The mounted guns displayed



*Mountain-guns in action.*





their usual tendency to fall to pieces without any apparent cause; but this only added to the fun, and I fancy the retiring Moors were more scared than hurt. Sotomayor got a battery of Schneiders in position on a hill, from which he could also command the plain, and opened up a very effective cross-fire on the retreating foe. Tovar's Division then took up its quarters for the night on the hill commanding the Rio de Oro and the country beyond. Sotomayor proceeded to fortify his camp on the south side of the river, and the two divisions were speedily in heliographic communication, the Generals sending messages of mutual congratulation on the success of the day's operations. It was now already growing dusk, and I wanted to return immediately to Melilla to send off despatches. General de Torcy, a French officer who was following the campaign, said he would come with me; so also did my old friend Ritwagen, who was acting as special correspondent for a Spanish paper and for the London 'Daily Telegraph.' Before starting I was introduced to General Tovar, who is a most pleasant man, an able officer, and very popular with the troops. There were further delays before we could get on the road, and it was quite dark before I started, accompanied by Ritwagen and the muleteer, who had faithfully followed the troops. Before leaving I distributed the remainder of my provisions amongst the officers of Tovar's staff, and split my last bottle of champagne with the General himself. It speedily became so dark that I had the utmost difficulty in finding the road, which is nothing but a track among the hills and valleys into which this barren,

inhospitable country is broken up. I took a bee-line across country, and managed to come out at the only point where it is possible to cross the deep valley separating the ground which was being held by General Alfau's two battalions, and where the Headquarters' staff was still camped. We were challenged by the Spanish outpost-line, but my friend Ritwagen, who of course speaks the language, speedily secured us a passage through their midst, and shortly afterwards we met General Marina riding with his staff. I should have said that the General had sent an order to Tovar to return once more to Taxdirt, but Tovar replied that his troops were tired, that his present position was an excellent one, and he asked permission to remain, which was accorded him. The three days' operations completely cleared the territory of the Guelaia Peninsula north of the Rio de Oro. The enemy, if not forced into submission, were at least driven to ask for terms, and many came in to make an unconditional surrender. The Beni-Sicar territory is naturally barren and inhospitable, and without supplies and water the enemy were in no condition to keep up the struggle in this part of the field. They had also lost very heavily. The Spanish reported the tribesmen's losses at over five hundred killed, but this was probably slightly overrated. On September 24 Marina withdrew Tovar's Division into the town, so as to have it free to operate against Zeluan. Sotomayor was left in his fortified camp at Zoco del Had, from which he could command the whole of the valley of the Rio de Oro.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## THE OCCUPATION OF ZELUAN.

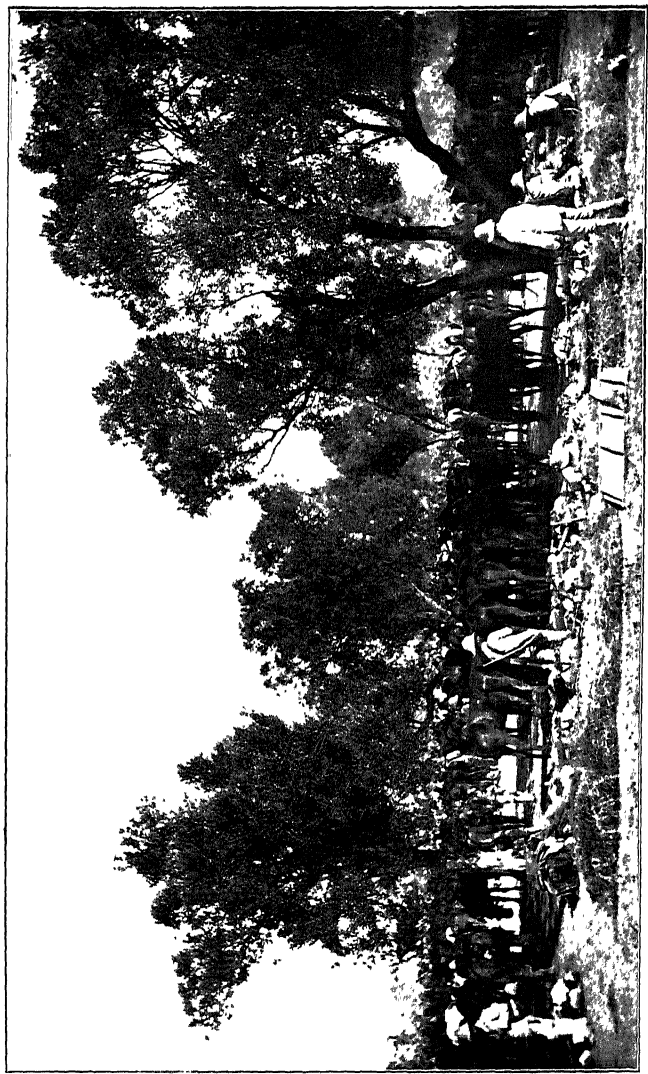
THE success of the operations in the Beni-Sicar territory now left General Marina free to deal with the gathering of the tribesmen round Zeluan and Beni-bu-Ifrur, and he lost no time in concentrating his army for what was hoped would be a final and decisive advance. On September 24th Aguilera's Brigade was moved from Zoco del Arbaa to a point in the south-west side of the Mar Chica called Pozo de Aograz, where some wells are situated. This movement was accompanied with very little opposition, and a fortified camp was constructed. On September 26th the second brigade of Orosko's Division was also moved to Pozo de Aograz; and on September 25th the whole division, less a battalion left at Zoco del Arbaa, moved down the Mar Chica on Nador. I was unable to ride the sixty kilometres to Pozo de Aograz in time to join Orosko, so I rode down the railroad line to Atalayon, from where I could obtain a good view of the advance. The First Division met with but little opposition, for the open plain over which it advanced offered no facili-

ties for defence. Before occupying Nador it was the object of Orosko's Division to seize a low hill called Tauima, which seems to have been placed by nature as a half-way defensive post to any advance on Zeluan from Nador. From Atalayon I had an excellent view of this mass of troops pushing forward, backed by the fire of eight Schneider guns, and brushing away the small bodies of the enemy like so many flies off the smooth surface of a window. Tauima was speedily seized, and two battalions of the Del Rey Regiment were left to hold it, with some mounted guns. The Moors, seeing it was impossible to save Nador, closed in behind the division in small numbers; but the Schneider guns were turned round and quickly drove them off. It was now four o'clock, but Orosko wasted no time, and immediately pressed forward on Nador, which is a very fine, large, scattered village, densely overgrown with prickly pears. There are also some beautiful gardens, olive-groves, and fig-trees. Nador is, in fact, the largest and most prosperous village in the Riff territory, and the ground round it is highly cultivated; but it offered few facilities for defence, being commanded in rear by a long-range fire from Atalayon, and also from Sidi Hamed el Haj. Directly the troops moved forward from Tauima, the guns in these two positions opened up a heavy fire on the village, and the Moors quickly abandoned any idea of defending it, dispersing in small groups amongst the Beni-bu-Ifrur hills. Their women and children had been removed on the previous day. By six o'clock Orosko's Division

was in complete possession of Nador, and a camp was selected for the night. The troops found themselves in what was to them, after their long stay at Zoco del Arbaa and at Pozo de Aograz, a veritable Garden of Eden. There was excellent water, a comforting shade, and an illimitable supply of prickly pears, figs, and olives; while the enemy had fled in such a hurry that they had left behind them thousands of chickens, which formed a more than welcome addition to the hard biscuits and bully beef in the soldiers' knapsacks. The troops had not been in Nador five minutes before a hundred fires sprang up, and every household was speedily in flames. Through my glasses I could see small bodies of men cutting down the trees and destroying the prickly pears, and in another quarter of an hour the whole scene was hidden from view by the immense pall of black smoke which darkened the horizon and almost hid the sun. I then rode back to Melilla to learn from Colonel Lewis that Tovar's Division was to advance on Nador the following day at grey dawn.

At an early hour on September 26th the whole of Tovar's Division left Melilla, and marching down the line of the railroads, was concentrated on the under-features in front of Atalayon at about 10 A.M. Here a long halt was made, and the troops took up a position as if expecting an attack, but the enemy did not even show himself. Small parties were then sent forward to destroy the villages, and the division swept along the shores of Mar Chica towards Nador. Between eleven and twelve we entered the village without having fired

a shot, and joined hands with Orosko's Division. Word was then passed round that no further move could be made that day, but on the following morning there would be a general advance on Zeluan. I had brought out my mule with sufficient provisions for three days, and settled down comfortably with my friends of the First Division, whom I had not seen for a considerable time. I met the Princessa Hussars, who invited me to come and stay at their camp, and I spent a very pleasant afternoon and evening with de la Maza and the Princes Raniero and Philippe de Bourbon, and the chaplain of the regiment. During the afternoon I went all over Nador, and was much struck by the high state of cultivation of the gardens. Every house had been destroyed, and the trees in large numbers had been burnt or cut down. Many of the Spanish officers were indignant at this, and thought it unnecessary, considering, not without reason, that it would exasperate the Moors, and cause them to go on fighting even longer, if they found they had nothing to gain by submission seeing their property was destroyed. At about six o'clock I was delighted to see Colonel Lewis and Fortescue arrive on the scene, for I had almost given them up. They were accompanied by the French general, de Torcy. I spent a very pleasant night, for Prince Philippe de Bourbon, having to go on guard, very kindly gave me his camp-bed. On the morning of the 27th the two divisions were early astir, and moved out of Nador in two dense columns, to converge on Zeluan from the east and from the west. General Marina got his troops out of Nador



*Camp of the Princessa Hussars at Nador.*

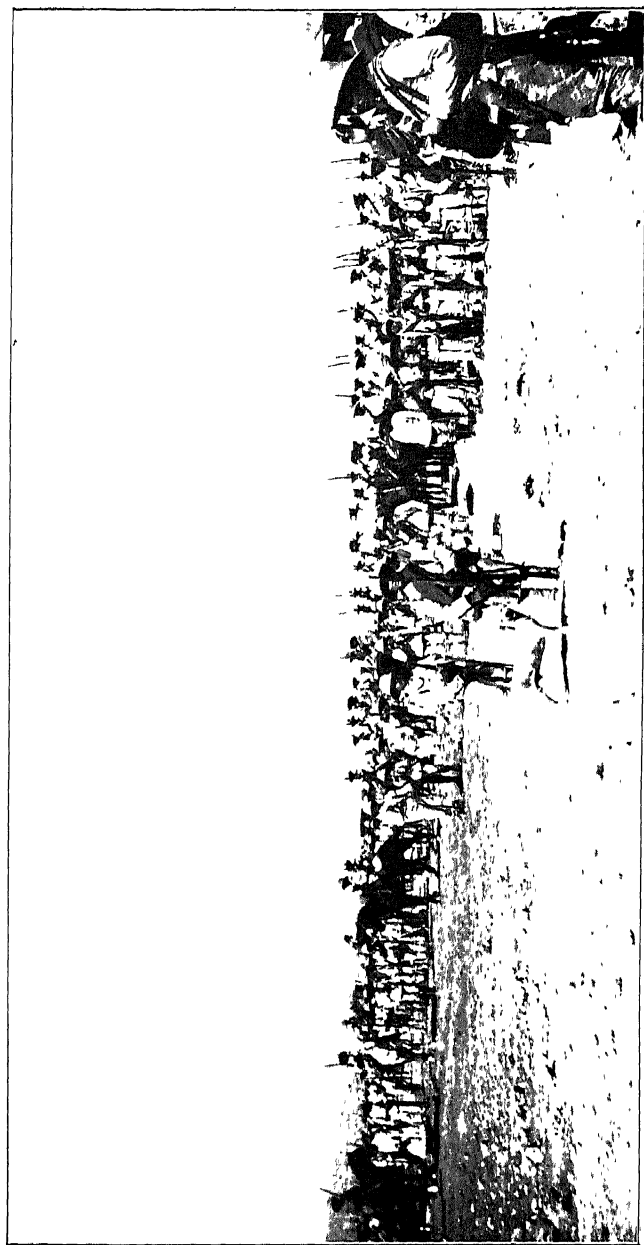




in fine style, without any confusion, but with perhaps a little too much delay. The troops were in the highest spirits: for two months they had been waiting for this final advance on what was thought to be the enemy's stronghold, and now that the longed-for moment had arrived, they stepped forward with great alacrity. The ground from Nador to Zeluan is a broad, open plain, offering no facilities for resistance, and the Moors made no attempt to oppose our advance. Passing Tauima, we picked up the Del Rey Regiment, leaving two battalions of Cazadores to hold the hill. The right column moved along at the foot of the Beni-bu-Ifrur Hills, and speedily became engaged with the enemy, who harassed its flank the whole way to Zeluan by fire from the hills. I thought myself that too much notice was taken of these small bodies, and for a time the march of the whole two divisions was delayed until they had been disposed of. The left-hand column, sweeping round by the Mar Chica, converged on Zeluan from the south-east without firing a shot, and the desultory fighting, such as it was, was entirely confined to our right flank. As we approached the great Kasbah the excitement became intense, and all hoped the Tribesmen would make a final stand in its defence. But this was not to be. The Riffs are, above all, cunning fighters, and were not going to concentrate in a position out of which they could be shelled in a few minutes. Every precaution was taken against surprise, and the artillery opened up a fire to see if any lurking bodies of Moors were hidden among the broken ground round the Kasbah. However,

this fire disclosed no Moors, but put up many large coveys of partridges. Even then the Spanish were not satisfied, and the infantry in the firing-line halted and fired volleys in the most absurd and aimless manner at the walls of the Kasbah. Then the cavalry pressed forward, joined by the English war correspondents, and we charged the last 300 yards with deafening "Vivas." One solitary Moor fired a few shots, and that was all. We were not allowed to enter the Kasbah until after General Tovar had made a kind of triumphal entry, which was a little unnecessary under the circumstances, as there had been absolutely no resistance. However, the Spanish are very punctilious on such matters, and the etiquette had to be observed. The troops were drawn up in front of the Kasbah, the bands played, and a solemn salute was given by all present; which proceedings at an end, we were permitted to enter, and to take up our quarters there for the night. General Marina, the divisional commanders, and ourselves all found quarters in the Kasbah.

On September 28th I left Zeluan to return to Melilla, as the operations seemed to hang fire, and I already began to gather that it was not the intention of Spain to follow up her victories, but rather to hold the territory she had already obtained by a line of fortified posts, and to come to terms with the Riffs. We rode from Zeluan to Melilla in company with the Princessa Hussars and some empty artillery waggons, which were being sent back for fresh ammunition. The journey was uneventful, and we were unmolested by the enemy. On Wednesday, September 29th,



*Saluting the Capture of Zéluan.*



Hill of Ait-Aissa was occupied at dawn, and we were able to visit the Gorge of Gurugu, where the unfortunate Pintos had met with his disaster on July 27th. My visit to this sombre gorge has left a very unpleasant impression on my mind. Parties of Spanish soldiers were busily engaged in searching for the dead bodies of their comrades, who had been left on the ground after the precipitate retreat of the brigade. About three hundred corpses were found scattered among the rocks and shrivelled by the hot African sun. It was obvious that many of these men had only been wounded, and had been left to a dreadful fate at the hands of a barbarous enemy. Some of the corpses were found with their hands and legs tied together and leaning up against rocks, where they had been placed by the Riffs. The Moors had then stood at a distance and stoned these unfortunates to death, because in every instance the skulls of the slain were found crushed to pulp by great boulders. But I will not dwell longer on the horrors of the scene. I was only too glad to escape from the ground which will ever bear the saddest memories for the Spanish army. I then climbed the Hill of Ait-Aissa, which was being fortified by a body of Spanish troops, under Colonel Prima de Vera, and which should have been occupied two months before. The Hill proved an ideal ground for defence, for it commands the Gorge of Gurugu, and the enemy would have been prevented from debouching from it and attacking the convoys.

During the operation which resulted in the

occupation of Zeluan on 27th of September, the Spanish lines of communication along the spurs of Gurugu profited by an entire absence of interference. On the night of the 27th there was an attack on General Sotomayor's camp at Soco el Had, in the Beni-Sicar district, on the watershed of the Guelaia Peninsula, and it was pressed with some spirit, but was easily repulsed, and the Riffs are said to have suffered. Sotomayor's guns were still sounding in the forenoon of the 28th, while a huge convoy passed from Zeluan to the second railway-house and back, but the individual trader, the war correspondent, and single orderlies travelled along the road under Gurugu quite unhindered. It was therefore rightly concluded that the Gurugu was, for the moment at least, evacuated. On the night of the 28th a mobile force was concentrated at the Hippodrome camp under General Real. It consisted of 2 battalions of the African Regiment, under their newly appointed Colonel, Prima de Vera, 2 battalions of Cazadores, and 2 companies of the Melilla discipline battalion, besides the normal garrison of the camp. With them were 2 batteries Mounted Artillery and a Telegraph section. This force was destined to hoist the flag of Spain on the two peaks of Gurugu.

At 5 A.M. the force marched, and under the leadership of Colonel Prima de Vera the two peaks were scaled and occupied in about three hours: at 8 A.M. every telescope and field-glass in Melilla was directed towards the two peaks of Gurugu where floated the Oriflamme. The troops

who ascended were preceded by native police who searched the ground, and they suffered several losses in the task. It was naturally expected that after having hoisted the flags and actually held the point for an hour or so, the troops would be withdrawn, but other counsels obtained, and the evacuation was fixed for 2 P.M., with the inevitable result. Curiosity alone, without considering the probability of exasperation, attracted a number of Riffs to reconnoitre the peak nearer Melilla. Colonel Lewis began to ascend this slope at 11.40 A.M. He heard the first shot fired at 1.20. By 2 P.M. he was within four minutes' walk of the top of the peak, but the descent had begun. Fire had been heavy for a quarter of an hour. The evacuation was carried out creditably. Two sections extended wide along the ridge that flanked the concave mountain-top, while the two others hurried down the gorge. They in their turn lined the first flanking spurs that offered, and the covering sections followed them down the gorge. Supports and reserves were well placed, the two batteries were brought far up on the mountain-side, and the descent was smartly executed and without undue hurry. But the company that had so triumphantly hoisted the flag in the morning retired under a heavy fire, and were followed by twenty or thirty Riffs bounding after them from rock to rock. The native police lost two killed and three wounded, and the company that crowned the mountain had two wounded and about eight men injured by contusions. One wounded soldier was carried pick-a-back by volunteers nearly the



whole way down the mountain,—no mean feat for the carriers.

The ascent and the descent had been made by the spur to which the ill-fated Pintos should have limited his demonstration on the 27th of July. This exploit was covered by the occupation of the Hill Ait-Aissa, already named, and which commands the two gorges which run from Gurugu to the railway. On the same day, September 29th, a good blockhouse was built there. Many lives would have been saved if it had been occupied as soon as the first reinforcements arrived, and the disaster of 27th July need never have occurred.

It cannot be too much regretted that the justifiable triumph of crowning the two peaks of the mountain was marred by a withdrawal under the fire of far-seeing mountaineers. On the same day General Marina at Zeluan heard that there was a formidable concentration of the enemy at Suk-el-Khemees, which is a very considerable village lying in the folds of the grounds under the high peaks of the Beni-Bu-Ifrur range, about five miles from the Kasbah of Zeluan. The range is precipitous towards the Rio de Caballo (west and north-west), and also on its southern limits, but approaches the Zeluan plains to the east and north-east in long rolling slopes of easy gradients, though between these slopes and the Kasbah is a dominating ridge. This had been occupied since the 27th by a permanent post of one battalion and one mountain battery. Marina was determined to make the Riffs show their hands in the direction of Suk-el-Khemees, and ordered a

reconnaissance in force for the morning of the 30th September. The lines of communication *viâ* Tauima and Nador had absorbed a considerable number of the two divisions with which Zeluan had been occupied on the 27th, so he disposed of units somewhat attenuated.

At daybreak on the 30th of September the outpost ridge was held by two battalions—one field and one mountain battery. The road to Suk-el-Khemees passes to the west of this ridge, and up the road at 8 A.M. marched General Tovar's Division of two brigades, reduced from six to three battalions each. The 1st Brigade (General Morales) had the Catalonia, Ciudad-Rodrigo, and Chiclana battalions. The 2nd Brigade (General Alfau) had the Madrid, Figueras, and Lleran battalions. In reserve was the 2nd Brigade of the First Division, under General Diaz Vicario, consisting of two battalions of the 6th Saboya Regiment, one battalion of the Wadras, and the battalion of the Leon Regiment. Two squadrons of the Reina Christina Regiment of cavalry and the two squadrons of Tovar's own Division were on his right and rear, keeping up his communications with the road to Nador in the plain far below; while on the left were the three squadrons of the Princessa's Hussars.

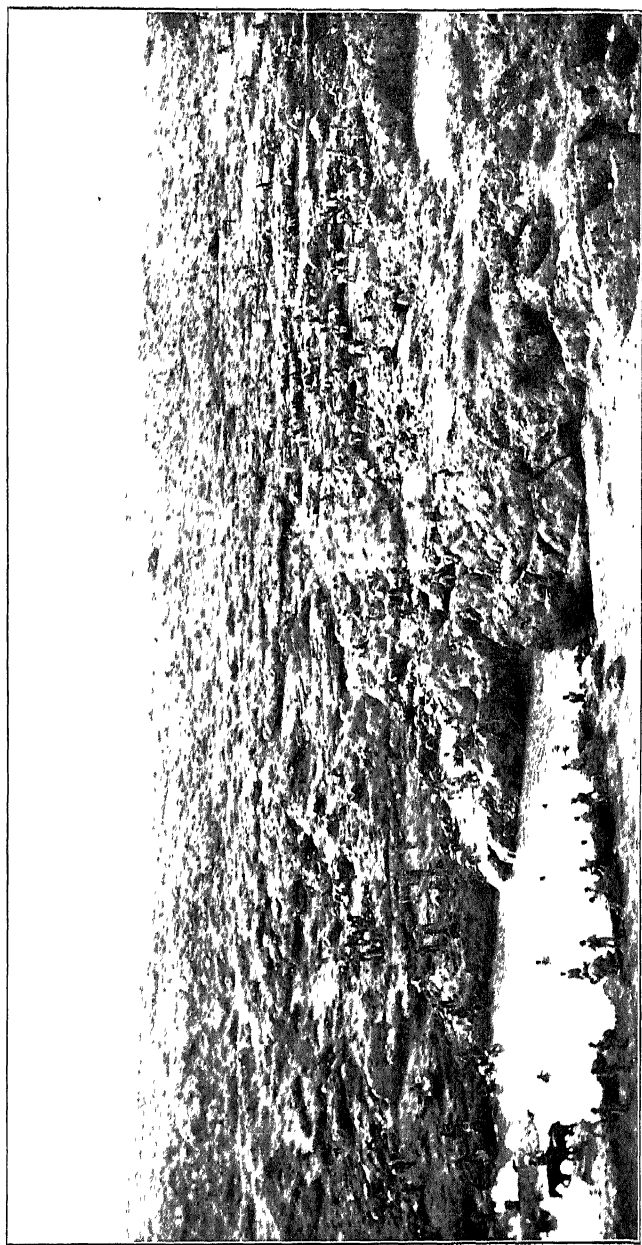
Suk-el-Khemees is covered on the north by a switchback line of three knolls, covering a mile and a half of front, and about 700 yards to the right front of this line is a high rocky peak which commands it, and more or less enfilades the whole. This line of knolls was occupied at a little

past 10 A.M. The 1st Brigade was on the right and the 2nd on the left, and on the centre knoll were the four batteries. Not before then did the Riff show at all. Gradually, however, sniping developed, and by 11 A.M. a large force showed in the high mountain-grounds about Suk-el-Khemees. Down the many minor gorges from the east numerous small columns descended with great dash when once they began, threatening to envelop Alfau's left; so the reserve brigade moved into echelon behind that flank. They were quickly engaged. Meanwhile from the centre the guns were doing great execution. A fight with varying intensity continued until 2 P.M., when it was found that the rocky peak had been occupied, and great annoyance was experienced from the fire of the small number of Riffs that had crowned it. On the right of the 1st Brigade was the Chiclana battalion. They are all hill-men from the high country round Malaga, and they were sent against this peak. Their advance was admirable, cover being very well taken and fire well controlled. They did not reach the top of that peak, though, for General Marina at last realised, what was obvious long before, that his reconnaissance in force had become much too definitely engaged, and withdrawal was ordered by Tovar from the left of brigades. The order of battalions was from left to right: *1st Brigade*—Catalunia, Ciudad-Rodrigo, Chiclana; *2nd Brigade*—Lleren, Madrid, Figueras.

The Catalunia and Lleren retired first, whilst the Ciudad-Rodrigo pressed forward to make the

preliminary retreat of the Chiclana possible, then the Madrid and Ciudad-Rodrigo, and finally the Chiclana and Figueras,—a company of the latter fine battalion pressing to point-blank range across the retiring left of the Chiclana to enable its final disengagement, and being the last of the Cazadores in retirement. General Diaz Vicario had left the battalion of the Leon as a divisional reserve on a knoll to the left of the Zeluan road, and the final pressure of the pursuing Riffs fell on them. Accidents of the ground brought the enemy to the points of their bayonets, but they beat them back and retired in good order by successive companies. The left company was the last to withdraw under a heavy fire, and eleven men of one section fell. Lieutenant de Villa commanding, rushed back with the remainder of the section. Twelve more men were hit, and he was left with five men covering the retreat of this convoy of wounded until they joined their company. When the last company of the Figueras retired the retreat became somewhat precipitate. The captain with eight men (the volunteers de Toledo and Camorra being two of them) stood his ground while he appealed to his company to halt. They halted, and advanced again until the captain rejoined them, and then continued a well-ordered retreat. Most battalions fired nearly all their ammunition away. The lieutenant-colonel of the Chiclana was very proud that his battalion only fired thirty rounds a man (although so heavily engaged), and that he could give away many rounds to other corps. The losses were heavy,

and General Vicario was killed just when the Leon Regiment was ordered to retire, hit by a spent ball. He had been Director of the Infantry Academy at Toledo, and was much esteemed. The casualties were stated at : 1 general, 5 other officers, and 25 men killed ; 9 officers and 220 men wounded. But I know that the Figueras had 81 casualties (1 officer, 10 men killed, 70 wounded), and the Leon had 70. The Chiclana and Ciudad-Rodrigo also suffered heavily, so the numbers must have been much higher. The Riffs are said to have owned to 103 killed and 167 wounded ; but they only count broken bones and serious wounds. The Spanish withdrawal was in good order. The Riffs withdrew too, and did not come seriously under the fire of the troops on the outpost ridge. But the day's fighting was quite useless. There were eight squadrons at Zeluan ; the slopes traversed were quite accessible to cavalry. A thrusting cavalry general would have unmasked the Riff force, and could have drawn the Riff down the Zeluan road to meet his doom at the hands of Marina's army hidden behind the last ridge which he permanently held. General Marina occupied the outpost ridge with three battalions—one field and two mountain batteries—and this force of course prevented pressure on Tovar as he withdrew. The dismounted Princessa's Hussars on the far left are said also to have done some service.



*Troops bathing in the Rio de Zeluán.*



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN.

AFTER the reconnaissance in force of the 30th September, Marina devoted his whole attention to victualling Zeluan and making good the vast amount of ammunition which had been expended, —pouches and artillery ammunition-waggons were nigh empty, and there was but a small reserve. As a first step to replenishing his stores, he soon reduced the number of mouths to fill, and withdrew the Princessa's Hussars and the Maria Christina Regiment to Nador (five squadrons in all), and two batteries of Schneider field-guns. The horses had begun to suffer from short forage, —for the inconceivable folly had been committed round Zeluan, when first occupied, of burning tons upon tons of barley and straw. So the Zeluan plain became a busy road. The ammunition-train had four motor-lorries of 6-ton capacity. There were several spacious and comfortable motor-ambulances; and the gentlemen of Spain, headed by the King, had despatched a goodly number of motor-cars, many of which were driven by the owners—volunteers. In the first days of October



the Pavia Hussars arrived, and with them the Infante Don Carlos de Bourbon, the General commanding the Madrid Hussar Brigade, to which the Princessa's Hussars also belonged,—the corps in which his two charming brothers serve, the Princes Raniero and Philippe, to whom I have already alluded. The Pavia were followed by the Queen's Lancers, and then a cavalry divisional General came—the force of fifteen squadrons being considered sufficient excuse for his existence. General Huerta is about sixty years old, very small but sturdy and active, and keen on his profession. He is much esteemed in the Spanish cavalry, and believes in his arm. We had a hearty greeting from him the day after he came, and gladdened his kind old heart by an appreciation of his men, especially delighting him with the account of the charge of the Alfonso XIII. on 20th September. He held out to us as the highest of all hopes to see his Lancers charge across the plains of Zeluan. Don Carlos accorded us a kind interview at his brothers' special request, and spoke in the warmest terms of his personal relations with British officers.

The distribution of troops now was as follows :

At Zeluan—Tovar's Division, but reduced by one battalion and a mountain battery at Tauima, and with two or three battalions at Melilla recouping after their losses of September 30th ; and a constant change was required because of the highly saline quality of the water at Zeluan.

Nador—Orosko's Division. Rail-head and communications, Imaz's Brigade.

Melilla—The bulk of the cavalry, the Melilla and African Regiments, and battalions refitting.

Zoco el Had—Sotomayor's Division. The position the division held was admirably chosen and occupied. It was on a detached eminence between the valley of the Rio de Oro and a deep gorge under Gurugu, along which passes the road to the river Quert and thence to Taza. The position was quite two miles long, held by camps, one at each end, a brigade to each, with minor camps commanding masked ground. The trenches were sensibly made, often well below the crest of the hill on the reverse slope—commanding completely the Zoco and neighbouring farms (the principal centre of the Beni-Sicar), and searching every approach.

Marina's projected plan of campaign at the beginning of October was a concentric movement of two divisions from Zoco el Had and Zeluan to turn Beni-bu-Ifrur, while the Orosko Division marched straight up the Rio el Caballo towards Atlaten.

Two hundred thousand rations had first to be collected at Zeluan, and these were accumulated by about the 15th, but still no move was made. The Riffs kept very quiet all this time, and the victualling was done in peace. Now there were two reasons for this quiet. One which appealed to all the Riffs in arms was that Ramadan (their thirty-day fast) was drawing to a close; the other was, that the rains were soon coming, and so the time of sowing was at hand, and the Beni-Sicar wanted peace to sow their land. Possibly a fur-

ther reason existed, in that Shaldy, chief Kaid of the Harka, had gone to Fez for Bairam. So much for the enemy. The Spaniards, too, were under exterior influence. Señor Perrerr was shot on the 15th October; the Maura Ministry was tottering, and it was no time for risks. The feast of Bairam was on the 17th October. On the 18th, in the morning, a spirited attack was made on the watering-parties near Zeluan. But the marauders were dealt with handsomely by a combined force under Don Carlos, who there won his spurs. He had four squadrons, a battery, and two battalions, and the Riffs were dispersed, the cavalry making a brilliant charge.

That day there was heavy rain, but the undaunted Riffs' ardour was not quenched, and in the evening down the gorges came an attack on the camp at Nador, evading under cover of the downpour the fire of guns and infantry from the Nador Hill. The attack was pushed to within ninety yards of the wire-entanglement, where a lodgment was made under a cactus hedge, which had actually been left standing right across the line of fire of the front of the camp. The Riffs were dislodged at daybreak next day, but the night's fight had cost the Spaniards some casualties. The Feast was further observed on the 19th and 20th (it lasts three days), for down the gorge of Gurugu two plucky attacks were made on the second blockhouse, which had cost initially 1 officer and 15 men killed out of the 60 who held its rising sand-bag walls on August 10th. While this renewed Riffian activity was

celebrating Bairam, another Spanish Brigade had landed under General Carbos—and this made up for more than all the casualties of the two past months.

On the 25th October Mulai el Hafid's Mission, under Kaid Bakr Bensenan, arrived at Melilla, and a few days afterwards news came that Shaldy was a prisoner at Fez. Then followed a period of negotiations for peace, the Beni-Sicar asking for protection, if their young men left the Harka. Bakr Bensenan met the Riff representatives and asked Marina for an armistice while they went to Fez, the Riffs pledging themselves to keep the peace if the Spaniards kept to the line they had occupied. The Spanish troops meanwhile had passed a very bad time in their crude camps, saturated with constant rain. But early in November the weather cleared up, and at last it seemed that a vigorous offensive would be taken. Leaving Zeluan a defended post, Tovar's Division was brought into Melilla, and a movement was projected across the Guelaia Peninsula *viâ* Hidun to turn north-west of Gurugu and clear up the position in the Tasuda Valley, the main Riff rendezvous, while the division at Nador advanced on Atlaten—thus ensuring the security demanded by the Beni-Sicar.

On the 5th November the movement began. At 7 A.M. there were drawn up north of the Rio de Oro—on the right the cavalry brigade; then three brigades of infantry—Morales's and Alfau's right and centre, and the Melilla Brigade on the left. Their objective was a ridge stretching eight

miles north and south, at a distance of about six miles north-west of Melilla, and they marched screened by the Pavia Hussars. The Spanish advance was unopposed. Morales's Brigade entrenched itself at Hidun, opposite Sotomayor's position and three miles north of it, on the other side of the de Oro valley, the remaining troops returning to Melilla. The next day the sweep round the north-west of Gurugu was abandoned. General Real with the Melilla Brigade advanced direct upon a spur north of Gurugu, which forms a plateau about 1800 feet above the sea, and is due east of Fort Purissima Concepcion. General Marina declared that the "object of the Riff Campaign was now achieved. Spain holds firm 100 kilometres, and dominates over an area of 300 kilometres." But the General added, "It must not be forgotten that in such a war as this, where a considerable tract of territory has been occupied without any intention of colonising, the native population has to be reckoned with, lest they be driven into despair by being driven from their homes" ('The Times,' November 9th, 1909).

Poor General, he was not speaking for himself or voicing the spirit of his army, but the Moret Ministry had succeeded that of Maura. Spain held the northern Beni-Sicar country and the whole Mar Chica and Mediterranean littoral up to Cape Agua to the east, besides the important point of Zeluan, the centre of trade and government of that part of the Riff. But the main concentration in Beni-bu-Ifrur had not been defeated nor reduced to unconditional surrender (the

alternative of defeat). A friendly Riff Kaid described in fitting terms the situation: "Spain has been at great pains to build a house strong and durable. There is only the roof to put on. If they stop building they will leave the walls exposed to the winds and the rain, and it will crumble away and disappear. If they want to live in it they will have to start building again" ('The Times,' November 12th, 1909).

But a bit of a roof was to be put on yet, and after seventeen days of negotiations and discussions and heaps of outside counsel, during which time a spur on the south of Gurugu above the village of Barraca had been occupied from Nador, a Reuter's telegram from Melilla announced on the 25th of November that operations had been resumed, and the troops had left to occupy Atlaten. The next day came the news that an advance had been made from Nador, and that Segangan and Atlaten had been occupied without resistance, and then that Marina had returned from Atlaten on the 27th, after having received many *submissions* of Beni-Said and Beni-bu-Ifrur Kaid; that the Kaid; were in flight and the Harka dissolved.

Now the programme of the Maura Ministry was to hold the line from the river Quert to the Mar Chica, and the final *résumé* of skilled official opinion in Madrid is that the occupation of Segangan and Atlaten has converted the Quert-Zeluan line into an accomplished fact, not convex as wished, but concave, with Beni-bu-Ifrur left out. All the Guelaia is now Spanish except

Beni-bu-Ifrur. The mines are within range of the guns at Atlaten. The points to be fortified must now be decided on. The policy of attraction is instituted.

The Spanish map is spoken of disrespectfully by those bright lights in Madrid, which means, I presume, that the Beni-bu-Ifrur, which represents the *nut not cracked*, is separated by a valley from the "massif" of Gurugu.

Since then, the Spanish Minister of Public Works has visited Melilla and inspected the posts occupied at Zeluan, Atlaten, Nador, and Zoco el Had, and the other day we heard of the triumphant entry into Madrid of General Tovar and his gallant Cazadores. But how about our friend the Kaid and his prophecy! Is it a water-tight roof that is on, or only one of scantling? The crops are in the ground and sprouting high. Harvest is in May. It is all gathered in by mid-June. The shooting season then begins on the Riff.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## THE SPANISH ARMY ON CAMPAIGN.

A CRITICAL survey of the Spanish army may not be out of place in these pages. The army was, so to speak, on trial after the war with the United States, and if the campaign in the Riff has not been productive of decisive results in the field, it may be productive in bringing about a radical scheme of army reform which will be of infinitely more value to Spain in the long-run than a victory over a comparatively unimportant enemy. The campaign has certainly disclosed the urgent necessity for a thorough overhauling of the military machine, and until this is taken in hand by the Government, the Spanish army may be considered a *quantité négligeable* in a European war. There is excellent raw material in both officers and men, but it needs a great deal of moulding into shape. The men are brave and patriotic, and could be made keen on their profession with better treatment and under happier conditions; and as long as these fundamental virtues are existent the reformer should have a not impossible task.



The Spanish soldier is small, wiry, hardy, and brave. In physique he strongly resembles the Japanese. His frugal life among the hills of Spain makes him strong and active, and able to subsist without discomfort on the diet of the camp and of the field. His naturally cheerful, southern temperament causes him to regard light-heartedly the dangers, privations, and vicissitudes inseparable from the soldier's life. His courage throughout the campaign never failed him on any occasion, and might well have been turned to greater advantage under more skilful commanders.

So much for the personal characteristics of the recruit. His training is sadly in fault. He joins the army for a single year, and to save money, and in order to pass more men through the ranks into the reserve, this period is often cut short, and he is dismissed to his home before his appointed period of enlistment is up. A general can come and inspect a battalion, put them through their drill, then, if satisfied, can disband them. This is a malicious system, for it is impossible to turn out a good soldier under a year's training, and this is hardly time enough. Thus that portion of the Spanish army which was mobilised in Spain took the field only half trained. I do not apply this remark to the brigade garrison at Melilla, which was naturally more seasoned to the conditions of active service. This lack of training was seen on the occasion of the Pintos disaster, when young recruits were taken from board ship, hurried ashore by companies in full marching order, with their private belongings in their hands, and

rushed up that fatal gorge to the firing-line, to be shot down even before they had ever fired a single cartridge in anger. The long stay in the camps round Melilla, with the accompanying drill, outpost, and convoy work, made a vast difference, and in the latter stages of the campaign the men manœuvred well, but always shot excessively badly. Neither the officers nor the men seemed to have the least idea of saving their ammunition, or of what is a decisive or effective range. To see whole companies standing up and firing volleys at from two to three thousand yards is funny if it were not serious. This fault lies more with the officers than with the men, for the latter are absolutely dependent on their officers, and are sadly lacking in initiative. Certain battalions shot better than others, according to the influence of their officers, but taking the army as a whole, the shooting both of the artillery and of the infantry was beneath contempt.

The army system needs reform from its basis, which is rotten. It is the same obsolete system which was responsible for Prussia's disaster before Jena, and one which has long since been abandoned by all the great Continental Powers. In the first place, a man can escape from service by the payment of a modest sum, which upsets the fundamental principles on which any compulsory system should be based. It does away at once with that national feeling of an entire nation in arms, irrespective of social position and wealth, without which a service, which should be an honour, becomes an irksome and unfair duty.

Let it be said to their credit that a very large number of those who escaped conscription by payment of the modest sum of £60 came voluntarily forward to serve their country in the ranks; but they came as untrained men, and only added an extra burden to the regular officers and instructors, which was hardly outweighed, except morally, by their example and patriotism.

The regular officers of the army are drawn for the most part from the middle classes, and their education costs them large sums of money which many can ill afford to pay. But they look to the obtainment of a commission to reimburse them for their initial expenditure. The company officer is given so much a-day for the upkeep of each man, and as he is pledged to spend no particular sum, there are unlimited opportunities for speculation in a semi-recognised form. The company officer is responsible for his men's food. A certain sum of money, amounting, I believe, to about a half-penny a-day, he must give them by way of pay, but he has to account to no one, except his conscience, for the balance; and as the consciences of all men differ, so also does the food of the companies throughout the Spanish army lack that standardisation of quality which is so desirable in the interests of the physique and comfort of the recruit. In some battalions with conscientious officers the men fared much better than in others where the officers were on "the make." I know of one instance where two Spanish officers are undergoing terms of imprisonment for too openly appropriating the pay of the men. I do not say

the evil is general. On active service the feeding of the men was more open to supervision by the commanding officers; but the system is an evil one, and puts a temptation in the way of those who, from their meagre financial circumstances, are only too apt to succumb. Lieutenant Gibbs gave me many instances of the manner in which the Spanish troops are fed. In the field they draw from the commissariat a certain number of army biscuits and bully-beef per man per day; the rest is found. The soldier has two meals a-day, consisting of his ration of army biscuit and whatever else his company officers buy for him. This generally consists of rice and meat, and was served up in the form of a stew. No other articles are served out except a very poor cup of coffee at reveille. Wine is not issued gratis except on very rare occasions. Each battalion has a canteen where their men can buy wine, cigarettes, and other articles, but their pay is so small that they can afford but little.

I have been told by those who know—and Lieutenant Gibbs also bore this out from his experience—that the non-commissioned officers possess too much power, and are not enough under the control and supervision of the officers. This is one of the gravest evils from which an army can suffer, for it often leads to corruption and to terrorism, and invariably makes the service unpopular with the men. The officers, with the non-commissioned wall between them and the rank-and-file, fail to hear of the grievances. The latter are too frightened of their sergeants to

make their complaints known, through fear of reprisals. Lieutenant Gibbs told me that as a class he had the greatest contempt for the Spanish non-commissioned officers. He described them as lazy, incompetent, and inclined to shirk their duties. The majority of the men, he said, preferred to get through their year of service without complaining, and to have done with it once and for all. Such trifles as kit-inspections, and drill, were almost unknown. The non-commissioned officers were generally the last on parade, even after the officers. "Often," he told me, "just before a parade or outpost-duty, they run to the canteen for bottles of beer, which the men are made to carry." He has seen the sergeants knock the men about unmercifully; but little of this ever reached the ears of the officers. In consequence, life in a Spanish battalion is not exactly a bed of roses. Gibbs caught a man stealing his blanket, and promptly administered such a thrashing that the culprit was removed to hospital. On his asking why the man had tried to steal his blanket, he was met with the calm rejoinder, "Well, I had lost my own, and when we lose any article we always try and take some one else's." In consequence, it was never safe to leave anything lying about; and Gibbs lost most of his kit until he became versed in Iberian customs, and had established a wholesome dread of the enraged Anglo-Saxon fist. Even his rifle was taken. The loss of the latter on active service is punishable with severity in most armies, and it was not without misgiving that he an-

nounced the news to his sergeant. But the latter merely replied, "No matter, here is another," and nothing more was said. Then again, on active service, when ammunition is served out, a careful inspection is made from time to time to see that it is not lost, and if a man loses his cartridges it is regarded as a very serious offence. Not so with the Spaniards, for again, to quote Gibbs, "I lost some of my cartridges—about fifty rounds: they were probably stolen. When I explained the fact to my sergeant he was in nowise astonished, but merely replied, "There are plenty more." Gibbs also told me he had seen soldiers in the field barter their cartridges for grapes with their enemy of a few hours before. Thus, from these few instances, it will be seen that their ideas of discipline are very different to our own.

The infantry battalions of the Spanish army are of four companies. The usual formation in attack is two companies in a firing-line, finding their own supports, and two in reserve. Three companies almost invariably became absorbed in the firing-line, and sometimes, as on September 20th, at Taxdirt, the whole of the Catalonia Cazadores were thus absorbed in one line, which occupied three kilometres of front. On this section, in the action of September 30th at Zoco el Khemees, all the battalions seriously engaged had three or four companies in the firing-line. The normal extension is 8 to 10 paces in single rank; and undoubtedly the open-order work of the Spanish infantry is the best feature of the army. They keep the alignment with accuracy, and move with swing

and flexibility. They take cover intelligently, and do not cling to it when ordered to advance, and are well under the control of their company officers. In some battalions the formation was adopted of breaking the line, on a perfectly open plain, into a series of sections moving to a flank in file. The utility of this was difficult to gauge; for in order to open an effective fire against a sudden attack, each section was obliged to front form. I think the idea was to lessen the effect of artillery-fire; but as the enemy had no guns, it was useless. I believe I am right in saying that General Pilcher introduced this system into his brigade at Aldershot, but the bulk of expert opinion was against him, and it has since been abandoned. Squares were occasionally formed—notably by the Tarifa battalion—during the action at Taxdirt of September 20th. Reinforcing generally took the form of filling gaps in the firing-line *en bloc* from the supports; but on one occasion General Morales tried the experiment, on September 20th, of replacing one battalion in the firing-line with another, with disastrous results, and the situation was only saved by a brilliant charge of the Spanish cavalry. The Spanish infantry are very slow in entrenching themselves. The shelter-trench is not automatically thrown up when a position is occupied, but generally appears after the troops have had a good rest and the danger of sudden surprise is past; but when they do go to work they are very good at handling the spade. Perhaps they are too inclined to cling to the crest-line. As I have already said, the fire-discipline is

very uncertain. Under normal conditions it is fairly under control, but when pressed it is very rapid, and ammunition disappears at an alarming rate. Both officers and men seemed prepossessed with the idea that the supply of ammunition is inexhaustible, and that it is their duty to loose off as much as they possibly can, quite irrespective of whether it is doing the enemy any damage. On September 6th one company of the Del Rey Regiment fired 15,000 rounds, having about ninety men in the firing-line, which works out at about 160 rounds per man. The engagement was not a serious one. The ranges at which they fire are enormous. With a light heart section-leaders order their men to fire at 2500 to 1500 yards, at an enemy greatly extended or often so well covered up as to be invisible. Volleys are freely resorted to, and seem to afford a special delight to both officers and men. The infantry carry about 150 rounds per man in their cartridge-boxes, which are slung on the belt and in their haversacks mixed up with their biscuits. The reserve ammunition is carried in the Cazadores battalions on mules; in the line battalions, 1st and 3rd Divisions, in very handy mule-carts, hung low between high wheels, drawn by two mules. It is distributed in the firing-line by men with double pockets. Care of arms seems to be absolutely neglected by all ranks. Such a thing as the inspection of rifles, as far as I could judge from their condition, was absolutely unknown: the rifling was so fouled by dirt and powder that it was impossible to see daylight through them.



Pull-throughs do not form part of the infantry soldier's equipment; and Lieutenant Gibbs told me that on applying for one to his sergeant, he was informed that they were only distributed once a fortnight to the men, if they asked for them. The state of the rifles can therefore well be imagined, and Gibbs, an excellent shot, who tested several, could not hit a fair-sized target at even a hundred yards with any of them. This neglect of arms is one of the most serious defects of the Spanish army.

Each battalion has two machine-guns. They are of the Hotchkiss pattern, having thirty rounds in each leaf of cartridges. Each gun is provided with two barrels, which are cooled in a bucket of water. This process of unscrewing the barrels has to be adopted after every few hundred shots, when the gun gets too hot to handle, and metal gloves have to be worn for this purpose. The heat causes the screws to jam, and the gun is often temporarily placed out of action. The machine-guns are employed as required, but generally on the flank, or to meet a sudden attack from the rear; and they were too often directed against small parties, and even against individuals, with the usual waste of ammunition. The Spaniards defended almost all their permanent posts by a barbed-wire entanglement, generally about 20 feet wide. They were too high and the uprights too fragile, and could be easily crawled under or stepped through. They were almost invariably placed too close to the parapet. The infantry carry a web equipment fastened with hooks, not buckles. The valise is

of linen with a stiff back, with a flap in front and a roll round the side. Gibbs reported it handy to pack and to carry. The men carry a small leather water-bottle. The total weight, including the rifle, is about 52 lb. The Spanish troops wore at Melilla the same striped linen uniform which they wear in the summer in Spain. It soon stains and becomes mud-colour. Wolseley helmets of the discarded Indian pattern, bought from our War Department, with "W.D." stamped on them, were served out after September 12th; but during the greatest heat the only head-covering were *képi* and round forage-caps.

It was difficult to discover what the system of outposts was. Behind trenches, and always at night, they consisted of groups and double sentries found by them. It seemed to me that in the entrenched positions a quite unnecessary number of men were kept on duty. In the day-time, when no entrenched line was held, there was a fairly advanced cavalry screen of vedettes, with infantry pickets and sentries behind them. There seemed to be no concentric scheme for the line of pickets, and they were generally too near their sentries. Double sentries were always employed, and the vigilance was somewhat indifferent. On September 12th, accompanied by Captain Fortescue, I rode the whole way from Restinga to Melilla in the night, getting past all the Spanish posts without being challenged, fearing every moment to be received by a volley; but it was not until we reached the very centre of the town, and were passing the artillery camp, that a sentry held us

up for a few moments. It would have been just as easy for a few hundred fanatics to have taken the same road as ourselves, and to have run amok in the centre of the town.

The Spanish cavalry were not made nearly enough use of during the campaign, and not one of the infantry generals seemed to have the least idea of handling this arm of the service. A cavalry commander might well have been appointed earlier, but General Huerta did not arrive to take command until the campaign was practically at an end. Reconnaissances were never undertaken seriously. When Zeluan was first occupied eight squadrons were under General Marina's command. But the easy plain which turns Beni-bu-Ifrur was never searched to any distance. On the march the cavalry were kept too much in hand. In a very open country the main body of the cavalry was massed too conspicuously, while the contact units almost invariably retired before individual skirmishes of the enemy, and no attempt was made to brush aside small bodies. Shot action was only once or twice resorted to. The most notable of these occasions was during the operations of September 20th, at the action of Taxdirt, when three troops of a squadron of the Alfonso XIII. Regiment delivered a good charge, but suffered heavy losses. On other occasions many good opportunities were lost. Dismounted action was often resorted to, and with satisfactory results in the reconnaissances in force on September 30th; but on that occasion the cavalry would have been far better employed as a mounted force, and had

they been thus utilised General Tovar's Division would not have fallen into a trap and lost so heavily. The proportion of horse-holders is one in four. The equipment of the cavalry consists of a very heavy saddle and a sensible Pelham bit. A great deal of weight is carried in the wallets, which must hamper a horse's fore-hand. The cavalry are armed with a carbine Mauser 1898. The sword is a new one, and appears excellent to the advocates of the straight sword. It is well weighted in the forts, it tapers to a point, and is beautifully balanced. The grips give plenty of room for the hand, and the hilt good cover. But after the charge of September 20th, a very large percentage of blades broke when withdrawing them after a thrust, which seems to show that the quality of the steel is somewhat lacking. The Spanish cavalryman, though a smallish man, rides on an average 19-stone, which is rather heavy for the field. Their horse mastership is distinctly good both in stable and in camp. The Spaniards are very fond of their horses and mules, and make them a personal care. Their horsemanship is also good, considering the length of service. But orderlies ride too fast; and even officers with escorts are inclined to waste the energy of their animals by galloping down streets and over rough stony ground for the purpose of showing off.

The gun of the Spanish artillery is a Schneider 75-mm. It is an excellent weapon, and in skilful hands is a very quick firer, but the Spanish gunners have not had sufficient practice to render

them very skilful in using it. The shield gives good protection above and below the gun, and the waggon complete cover. The usual range was up to 5000 metres, and the most effective at 3500 to 4000. In each battery there is a telescope conning-tower on one of the ammunition-waggon, providing complete cover for an officer. The batteries consist of four guns. About 400 rounds a gun is carried, and only shrapnel is used, twenty-four rounds in each limber, and twelve ammunition-waggon per battery. There is a smith's forge-waggon and an ambulance-waggon as well. The mountain-guns, old pattern Schneider, were all carried on mules. The shell is the same for the mountain-guns as for the field-guns—viz., 75-mm. But the mountain-guns were very ineffective, being old, the rifling worn, and the recoil is so great that rapid or accurate firing was quite out of the question. The shrapnel was badly timed, and frequently burst on the ground. As I have frequently had occasion to remark, premature explosions with both field and mountain artillery were all too frequent, and had a most demoralising effect on the infantry in the firing-line. In one of Mr Rudyard Kipling's poems a soldier in the firing-line is made to remark, on hearing the shells whizzing over his head and bursting on the position he is advancing to attack, "The guns, thank God, the guns!" but the poor Spanish soldier, when placed in a similar position, was far more inclined to remark, "The guns, oh Lord! the guns!" and immediately proceeded to open out, so that a great gap often appeared in

the firing-line in front of the friendly, but nevertheless dangerous, artillery.

It is naturally difficult for a foreigner to form a true opinion of the working of the Staff. One can only judge from what one saw and from what one was told. But in the field there seemed to be a lack of communication both between individual units and between the various brigades, divisions, and Headquarters. The chief means of communication was by heliograph, which, thanks to the African sun, generally worked extremely well. But after an engagement no General ever seemed to send back either a written or a verbal account of what had happened to Headquarters, either by a Staff officer or by an orderly. On two occasions, once after the action of September 6th, Colonel Lewis and myself were the first to give a detailed account to General Marina of the day's work, and up to that time no other information had reached him. On the following day I was again the first to bring in news of the reoccupation of Moulai el Sherif. The Staff officers generally failed to keep themselves abreast with such details as reserve of stores and supplies, percentage of sick and wounded, numbers of the enemy, and available transport. The Intelligence Department was practically non-existent, and the Spanish Headquarters relied on the most unreliable news, brought in by supposedly friendly Moors, great numbers of whom were always found in the neighbourhood of Headquarters. The maps issued of the Guelaia Peninsula were hopelessly inaccurate; and this is one of the most curious examples

of the defects of the Spanish character, for though they have been in possession of Melilla for close on four hundred years, and have been engaged in innumerable campaigns against the Moors, they have never yet taken the trouble to make a thorough survey of the ground twenty miles around the town. In fact, I am told that no white man had ever ventured up Gurugu until September 29th. One can hardly imagine such a state of affairs had the Anglo-Saxon race been in possession of Melilla, for it would have been a point of honour with every newly-joined subaltern to climb up that sombre mountain, and to unveil the mysteries of its hidden valleys. Orders were transmitted into the field by gallopers only, and not by signallers. Cycle orderlies were freely used where the ground was favourable, and automobiles were also employed between stations. It took a very long time to connect up the various posts by a field telegraph; and here again the Spaniards displayed their customary apathy. I cannot say whether orders were issued clearly or not. Commanding officers were informed of movements very late, and this entailed much delay and discomfort. Men and horses daily waited in marching order an inexcusably long time before marching or even parading to march. In the field the divisional commanders and brigadiers dined much too late, often not before nine o'clock, with the result that they got off very late on the following morning. The various commanding officers were always very free in criticising their superiors and one another, but in the field worked loyally

together, and all seemed most anxious not to hide their lights under a bushel, although in most instances the flicker was of the feeblest character.

Each soldier when necessary carries three days' supplies of rations, and they have carried four. There is no regimental transport, and divisional transport is arranged according to circumstances. The field ration consists of Chicago beef and very hard biscuits. In barracks and in permanent camps the captain of the company feeds the men, receiving an allowance of one peseta a-day, hence the great irregularity I have already spoken of. There were no field bakeries. The transport consisted of mules and camels, with a limited number of four-wheeled waggons. The mule-load is 220 lb. The normal camel-load is just double; but they seldom carried full weight, for the three hundred camels brought from Or were of inferior quality and badly saddled. There were also four motor lorries of Spanish make of 6-tons burden. They did very well on fairly level ground, and got over some very rough country between the railway heading Nador. Motor ambulances were also successfully used.

The cavalry are mounted on useful Spanish horses, a little bit coarse, but with lots of substance, and very active. Fifteen per cent at least are crossed with blood stock, and gain by it immensely. They average 15.3 to 16 hands. The Field Artillery were on the whole very well horsed, especially those batteries which arrived earliest on the scene. They have a compact coby French horse, smaller than our field battery



horses, and would not weigh as much, but they are enduring, and do their work well. The mules are the best I have ever seen. They are about 14.2 in height, though some are bigger, well bred, compact, and well-ribbed up. They always seemed to be in splendid condition. There is one man to each mule, and the men take the greatest pride and interest in them. The wastage began to be considerable amongst the horses, chiefly from sore backs, due to loss of condition. There was a scarcity of straw at Melilla, and the horses had nothing but corn. Tons of straw were burnt in the neighbourhood of Zeluan by the infantry, who always fail to remember that a horse requires a different diet to themselves. There were no remount depots, but three extra horses for each battery: this was no doubt due to the fact that the reserve animals could be kept in better condition at Malaga, fourteen hours' steam away.

The arrangements for collecting the wounded in the field were chiefly regimental. There were three stretcher-bearers per company and six mules, with six cacolets per battalion under the charge of the battalion medical officer. The collecting-stations were regimental. The dressing-stations were under the brigade surgeon, who had an establishment for ambulance-work. Hospital-trains were requisitioned as required, but there were no railway ambulance-carriages. The motor-ambulances, carrying eight beds, seemed to run well. The normal number of sick was very small until the saline water at Zeluan upset digestions. The figures were never given as high as 4 per

cent until the end of September, but removal to Malaga was freely resorted to, or the percentage of course would have been much higher. Gibbs told me there were frequently as many as 40 to 50 men sick per battalion in barracks. The sanitary arrangements of the Spanish army were sadly wanting, and above all, the care of the water-supply. In a country where good water is scarce, no pains should be spared to safeguard the supply against waste and pollution, but I never saw a water-guard over the wells or rivers. Directly the army reached its appointed camping-place there was a wild rush for the water, and the wells speedily became so foul as to render the water undrinkable. At the rivers the men would bathe above the place from which the drinking-water was taken, and horses would be allowed to drink above it and to stir up the mud. When Akarman was taken on September 6th, excellent water was found in the village; but the troops, on evacuating it, proceeded to destroy the springs and wells, quite oblivious of the fact that the supply would have been of the greatest advantage to any force advancing on Zeluan. In the expedition against the Beni-Sicar the same lack of foresight was displayed.

The balloon was of the Draachen type, German pattern, elongated, and made of yellow oil-silk. The French Headquarters was marked by a similar balloon at the Grande Manceuvres du Centre de Touraine last year. It took about two hours to inflate, and could ascend, as a captive, 1000 metres. It was of the greatest utility to the artillery, the

fire of which was much improved by the telephone-messages from the balloon, but as an intelligent factor in the field it performed but little reliable service in a broken and mountainous country. The climate did not seem to affect the material, but of course the escape of gas was great in the heat. The Draachen balloon is 25 metres long, and of 700 cubic metres contents. The field-equipment includes ten waggons of six mules each, and two waggons of material and pump. Eight of the waggons carry cylinders enough for one ascent, and nearly half as much gas again to allow for escapes. The material includes a huge canvas carpet, on which the balloon is always brought to rest. Search-lights were employed by the Spaniards, who had two at Melilla and one at Restinga. I do not know the types, but the dynamos were very weak and the range very limited.

Putting aside minor details, what strikes one about the Spanish army is that it lacks all that great driving power without which it is useless to look for success in the conduct of military operations. It seemed incapable of keeping the field for any length of time, or of achieving any definite result. Three times during two months, when it really looked as if a decisive movement was about to take place, the operations were abandoned or frittered down to a purely local scale. The army was excessively slow in its operations, and appeared incapable of fighting for two days in succession without time to recuperate. From the strategical standpoint the operations were of the most un-

ambitious character, and General Marina never seemed able to tear himself away from his base at Melilla, when, with the vast number of troops at his disposal, he should have brought the campaign to a decisive close. But the movements of an army are dependent upon the perfection of every detail of the machinery, and until some of these defects are remedied, it is impossible to expect great results.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## THE FUTURE OF MOROCCO.

MOROCCO is the last of the semi-barbarous countries of Northern Africa to withstand the advance of the civilised Powers. The very name of the country has been a by-word to Europeans for centuries, and the Moors have enjoyed a reputation second to none for prowess in the field, and for cruelty towards those who have fallen into their hands. The Barbary pirates were long a terror to mariners in the Mediterranean and Atlantic, and many are the terrible tales that have come down to us of the horrors endured by the Christian captives—men, women, and children—who were sold as slaves and carried off into the interior of Morocco, there to languish out the remainder of their days in the households and harems of the powerful Caids. The French, who started on the conquest of Algeria in 1830, have never yet ventured to attack the Shereefian Empire, although they won the battle of Isly as long ago as 1844. The recent campaign in the Chaouia has been the first active enterprise undertaken by the French against

the Moors, apart from skirmishes on the frontier. Of recent years it has become more and more evident that France would shortly have to measure her strength with her neighbour, as the logical outcome of her mission of civilisation in Northern Africa; but the shadow of international complications has continually postponed the inevitable day, and thus at the beginning of the twentieth century Morocco remains in the same state of anarchy and barbarism as of old. The customs, government, and religion of the Moors have not changed one whit, and there seems to be but little desire for a change, as Abdul Aziz found to his cost when he attempted to introduce reforms of a radical character into the country. Abdul Aziz has lost his throne owing to his partiality for unorthodox reforms and for the habits and society of the infidel. The problem of the future is: Can a Sultan, bent on the same mission, but cast in a sterner mould, succeed where Abdul Aziz has failed? The regeneration of the old-world dynasties, which have fallen into decay in the course of ages, is no doubt essential to the progress of civilisation and for the welfare of mankind at large, but there is something rather sad in contemplating the process of transformation. If a nation which was once great becomes feeble and lags behind on the road of progress, it does not follow that all in the lives and institutions of the people is necessarily bad or rotten, and requires sweeping away before a new edifice can be built. Much that is excellent survives from former times. There are the local habits,

traditions, and practices of religion which have formed the mainspring of the life of the nation in the days of its greatness, and by which the character of its people was formed and the conduct of their life guided. But civilisation is ruthless, and affects not only the material but also the mental and intellectual life of a semi-barbarous people. A virgin land is never the same once the engineer has waged his successful struggle with nature, and the soldier is installed to keep the peace. Surely it is to be regretted that some of the finest of nature's unclaimed gardens cannot be left in their natural state to delight the traveller and to bring relief to the overtaxed nerves of the dwellers in crowded cities.

Morocco of all countries deserves to be preserved untouched, because nowhere in the world is the contrast between civilisation and barbarism more sharply defined than by what the voyager sees in Gibraltar, and then in Morocco, only two hours' steam across the Straits. The savage Orientalism is refreshing, and the change acts as a tonic. But unfortunately a country as rich in natural wealth as Morocco cannot hope to escape for ever the unwelcome attentions of the great Powers, ever on the look-out for fresh markets for their goods, and for new homes for their expanding populations. The problem, which the future alone can decide, is, can Morocco work out her own salvation, or how far must it be accomplished for her by foreign bayonets and foreign brains? The problem is a difficult one, and is further complicated by the

recent movement towards constitutional government and social reform in Turkey, Persia, India, and Egypt. The year 1908 will surely go down to history as the beginning of the epoch of Mohammedan constitutionalism throughout the world. But up to the present the agitation has hardly been felt farther west than Egypt, although signs of unrest have not been wanting in Algeria, where the new conscription law caused grave discontent. Are the Mohammedans of Algeria and Morocco as capable of self-government as the Turks seem to be proving themselves to be? But I leave Algeria out of the discussion, because the country is held in such an iron ring that it cannot hope to break loose from France's military occupation, unless, by some mischance, the larger part of the French Army were suddenly called away to take part in a European war, as in 1870. The withdrawal of 1870 was followed by disastrous results, for rebellions broke out all over Algeria, and were only with difficulty suppressed. However, it is with the problem of the future of Morocco that I am concerned.

The international situation has entirely changed during the past year, and Morocco stands to-day face to face with France, with no combination of friendly or interested Powers to safeguard her independence. Since she has arrived at a satisfactory understanding with Germany, France has acquired a free hand to deal with the Moors, for, in spite of the Act of Algeciras, it has only been the fear of Germany which has stayed her hand. The Act of Algeciras remains on the international



statute book, but the entire *raison d'être* for the passing of the Act has disappeared now that France and Germany have established an *entente*. Germany by her withdrawal from active participation in Moroccan affairs recognises that France has special rights and interests in Morocco very similar to those England exercises in Egypt, and the sole remaining consideration is the maintenance of the open door and equal trading rights for all. Therefore, now that the danger of international complication is passed, France is at liberty to contemplate, quietly and soberly, the immense task she has voluntarily undertaken, namely, the development and civilising of the Shereefian Empire.

Her colonial army will, no doubt, rejoice at the prospect of further work, which means fresh laurels, and the excitement and activity which are always so welcome after the dull round of garrison life in the isolated stations of Algeria. But surely there must be many amongst the more reflective of Frenchmen who will regard with dismay and misgiving the responsibility of this new and tremendous addition to the burden of empire which France has taken on her shoulders just at an epoch when her position in Europe is hardly an enviable one. The responsibility is greater to-day than her statesmen anticipated a few years ago, because France will not only have to contend against the savage fanaticism which will undoubtedly be opposed to her, but she will also have to face—if a precedent can be drawn from what has happened in other Mohammedan communities—the desire amongst the Moors for

constitutional government and social reform. It is a difficult matter to hold a powerful Mohammedan people under control when they are suffering from the stagnation and decay of centuries of effortless existence ; but it will be an infinitely more difficult matter to hold a Mohammedan people in subjection who desire to reform, and are determined to bring their standard of life into line with that of the Christian communities. Some of the more enlightened of the Moors may welcome the assistance which France can render them in the development of the commercial resources of their country, but once the spirit of individual liberty gets abroad, and the people begin to feel its inspiring call, it is hardly likely they will be willing to settle peacefully down under the rule of the infidel. Surely, then, France is taking upon herself a very serious responsibility as the guardian angel of Morocco's destinies, just at a moment when the spirit of Mohammedan revival is ripe throughout the world. The problem French statesmen will have to face is a mighty one, and may have a vital effect on the future of their country. I have explained elsewhere that the military resistance the Moors are capable of offering to Gallic arms is feeble, but this does not render the fewer men necessary for the gradual occupation and pacification of that country once the main armies of the Arabs have been dispersed or destroyed. Can France afford, in the present disturbed state of European politics, to lock up a large army in Morocco, and thus enfeeble her resources on the Continent ?

The most notable event in the Moroccan drama during the past year has been the change of attitude on the part of Germany. Three years ago Germany was apparently ready to fight in order to maintain the independence of Morocco, and to prevent France from getting possession of the country. Instead of a war the Act of Algeciras was passed, and this was supposed to guarantee the independence of Morocco for all time, and to give all the Powers equal trading rights. But now Germany has suddenly entered into a special agreement with France, which has made the Act almost a dead letter. By her recent undertaking to leave France a free hand she has decided the ultimate fate of Morocco; and the independence of the Moors, of which for a time she posed as the champion, has been sacrificed. What has been the guiding motive of Germany's policy in Morocco during recent years? Her commercial interests are hardly alone important enough to explain her keen anxiety to safeguard the sovereign rights of the Moorish people. Now we see a complete *volte-face*. Her policy has veered right round; she has thrown over the Moors, and has apparently cast the whole burden of the development of the country on the shoulders of France. The policy of Germany has been well described as that of the "open sore." It has been her aim to keep the Moroccan question continually alive, and her own attitude towards France one of continual menace. It is in her interest to keep a large French Army always busy in Algeria, and thus weaken her position in Europe.

There are two schools of political thought in Germany over the question of Morocco, and the downfall of the policy of the one and the substitution of that of the other have led to the complete reversal of her policy. One party, which was headed by the late Von Holstein, the permanent head of the Foreign Office, believes that it would be a standing menace to Germany if France was allowed to unite Algeria and Morocco into one great colony from which to draw an excellent supply of raw material for her armies. They fear that the French might raise several hundred thousand men from amongst the Mohammedans of Algeria and Morocco and transport them to her Continental battlefields should the occasion arise. The memory of the terrible Turcos who fought so well in the Franco-German War still lives, and it would be a very serious problem for Germany if France were in a position to utilise her Mohammedan armies on the Continent. Well trained, well armed, well led, and only two days' easy steam from France, they would form a powerful reinforcement in times of need. Therefore it has been the policy of this school to stir up hostilities between France and Morocco, and to keep the French Army in Morocco fully occupied. Thus had war broken out three years ago, at the time of the Algeciras Conference, Germany would have posed as the champion of Morocco, and the Moors would certainly have seized the opportunity to attack the French on the Algerian frontier, and thus make the retention of the whole of the French armies in that quarter absolutely essential.

But this policy led Germany into dangerous waters, and kept Europe in a constant state of unrest. It necessitated the continual application of the pin-pricks of petty diplomacy in Morocco to keep the flames of discord between France and the Moors alive. The unfortunate Moors were led to believe that they could always rely on the assistance and support of Germany if their independence was threatened. This game might have been kept up indefinitely and with but small risk to Germany as long as France alone was involved; but it became altogether more serious once the *entente* between France and England was established, and the two nations adopted a common policy in Morocco. The journey of Dr Vassel in August 1908, whereby Germany unofficially recognised Moulai el Hafid as Sultan before the other Powers had come to a decision, was the last despairing application of the policy of the "open sore." It aroused general resentment in France, for it was looked upon as a direct challenge to her special interests which had been recognised by the Act of Algeciras. For a short time the presence of Dr Vassel at Fez cast a final flickering glamour over Germany's influence and prestige in that country. But these efforts, which under other circumstances might have led to such decisive results, came to naught, because Germany's promises were never borne out in the fulfilment. A suspicion began to get abroad amongst the Moors that Germany was merely bluffing. The French Army was not forced to quit the Chaouia at the bidding of a united Europe; the Casa

Blanca incident failed to lead to war, and Germany's abandonment of Turkey at the outbreak of the Near Eastern Crisis still further aroused the suspicion of Moulai el Hafid that he could not count to any great extent on his professed ally. These incidents and the lack of sincerity in the German policy completely shattered the proud title which the Kaiser had taken to himself of "The Protector of the Mohammedan Peoples of the World." Thus the party who supported the policy of the "open sore" became gradually discredited, for if the pin-pricks fail to draw blood and are never followed up by a more vigorous thrust, the victim speedily acquires a contempt for them. Germany's position and policy in Morocco were made impossible once she stood unmasked as a bluffer who in spite of all her boasting had no intention of fighting on behalf of those interests which she professed to have so much at heart. France began to adopt a bolder attitude, and the Moors gradually began to learn exactly how much Germany's friendship was worth when put to the test. Thus France, in spite of the many blunderings of her statesmen, has scored all along the line, and the unfortunate Moors, who firmly believed in the sincerity of Germany's promises to maintain their independence, have been sadly left in the lurch.

But there are many Germans, representing the other school of political thought, who believe that Germany has immeasurably strengthened her position by abandoning an active policy in Morocco, and allowing France a free hand to

become absorbed in some aggressive policy. Of this party Bismark was an adherent. He once declared that French enterprise in Northern Africa should be encouraged, as it would tie their hands and keep their eyes off the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. This party, whose policy has now been adopted, do not believe there is any danger of France raising a great Mohammedan army and of utilising it to fight side by side with her conscription army in Europe. They argue that it is impossible to reconcile races of such vitality, high mentality, and fanaticism, with all the glory of their past history and traditions, to the rule of the infidel; and if France does eventually raise a further large Colonial army from amongst the Moors, it will only be training fresh enemies against herself, who will have to be kept in subjection by still further depletions from her European forces. They point to the Mohammedan revival in Turkey and Persia as proof of their argument, and regard the supremacy of France in Morocco not as any accession to her strength, but as a positive embarrassment which for many years will tie her hands in Europe, and render a European war out of the question for her. It is the views of this school which have now prevailed, and there seems every prospect that they will hold the upper hand for a long time to come, because it would be almost impossible for Germany to go back on her present policy without provoking actual hostilities. As long as the open door is maintained, and Germany is allowed to pursue her commercial interests un-

molested, it certainly seems the most prudent policy for her to adopt. She has wisely renounced any territorial ambitions she may once have held, fully realising that they are incapable of fulfilment. Although the peace of Europe is not now likely to be disturbed over Morocco, there are many serious problems to be settled in the future, not the least of them being, How long will France be content to maintain the open door, when all the work and all the expense and all the responsibility for the development and guidance of the country rests on her shoulders? This is a question of equal importance to England as to Germany, because our trade interests are greater and are daily on the increase.

Then let us consider the position of Moulai el Hafid.

The last stage in his official recognition as Sultan of Morocco was reached when he accepted the Franco-Spanish Note in its revised form. But this does little towards settling the eternal Moroccan question, or towards restoring permanent peace to that distracted land. It commits Hafid definitely to a line of policy which cost Abdul Aziz his throne, and the question which the future must answer is, Can Hafid govern Morocco contrary to the expressed wishes of the majority of his subjects? For this is what he has pledged himself to do by his acceptance of the Franco-Spanish Note. The Sultan's position is one of extreme difficulty and delicacy, and he must now regard the actions of his brother Abdul Aziz, which enabled him to make his successful bid for the throne, with far more leniency than he did a year ago. Hafid is



beginning to ask himself seriously if he will be able to wear the crown which he has won so honourably, and enjoy the fruits of his well-earned victory. Already he has been obliged to do many things which have estranged his former comrades and supporters from his side. It is no secret in Fez that the two great Caids of the south, the Glaui and Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, who were responsible above all others for putting Hafid on the throne, are far from satisfied with the trend of events, and both have refused to return to the capital, preferring to dwell in fanatical seclusion and solitude in their mountain-fastnesses. The people of Fez are even more dissatisfied, for they consider they have been deceived and betrayed. They accepted Hafid as their Sultan on a strict understanding, and now they find his public actions are as blameworthy as were his predecessor's, whatever his personal character may be. Therefore, when the opportunity occurs, the people of Fez will be just as ready to rebel against Moulaï el Hafid as they were against Abdul Aziz, or as their ancestors were against Ilakam, and it is already freely rumoured that Hafid would have left the capital but for the fear of an outbreak. But Hafid is not to be blamed,—rather is he to be pitied. He started with the best and most patriotic intentions, but he has run up against the most impassable of all barriers—the steady, irresistible advance of civilisation and commercial development. No longer is it possible for semi-barbarous communities to remain isolated from their uncongenial but progressive neighbours, and

Hafid finds he must march hand-in-hand with Europe wheresoever she chooses to lead him, or else he must re-tread that dreary path which brought him from obscurity to power. If it is impossible for an Arab to free himself for a moment from his belief in predestination, Hafid must now be a disappointed and disillusioned man. He has done everything in his power, but the tide of time has proved too strong for him. He tried to breast it, now he finds he must swim with it or go under. The lack of sincerity in, and the resulting failures of, German policy in Morocco have shattered the Sultan's carefully-laid plans, and now he is faced by the disagreeable necessity of making the best terms he can with the avowed enemies of himself and his people. Hafid hoped to consolidate his position by playing off the Powers against one another, and by working on their ill-disguised jealousies. The quarrel between France and Germany was to be the corner-stone of Morocco's independence. Dr Vassel's early arrival in Fez encouraged Hafid, and tended to confirm him in his belief that he could count on Germany's support. He hoped and expected that war would break out between France and Germany, and these hopes ran high at the time of the Casa Blanca incident. "Surely," he would say, "there will be war now. Why do they not fight?" But no war followed. One after another he saw German actions in direct contradiction to German words, and gradually his faith was shattered. Germany's abandonment of Turkey in the Balkan crisis irremediably weakened her influence in Morocco, and

the finishing touch was put by the celebrated interview in 'The Daily Telegraph,' which was well known in Fez and eagerly discussed. Hafid saw he must change his policy before it was too late, and come to terms with France, or else run the risk of being abandoned to his enemies. French policy, after Hafid's recognition became inevitable, was far more skilful and successful than it was prior to the defeat of Abdul Aziz. Having made the inconceivable blunder of supporting a cause which the merest tyro in Moroccan affairs knew was hopelessly lost, and of rejecting the friendly overtures made by Hafid at the very beginning of his campaign, they wisely decided to regain their influence and prestige, not by any forward policy of their own, but by relying on the non-fulfilment of the promises of their rival. Thus the French Government took no steps to counteract the influence of Dr Vassel at Fez. They realised that German influence must decline with the failure of Germany to redeem her pledges. Meanwhile France quietly set to work to remind Hafid that she was indispensable to his welfare, and could make his position intolerable unless he chose to agree to her terms.

This policy has met with complete success. Germany has been discredited. Moulai el Hafid has accepted the Spanish Note almost without reservation, although he formerly announced he would never agree to it. He has also done other unpopular acts which are visible and known to all Morocco, and this must seriously weaken his position among his subjects. He has also allowed

the French Military Mission, under the able Commandant Marhin, to come to Fez to reorganise the army and to drill the troops. What act could be more unpopular than this? Monsieur Regnault has been to Fez, and his demands have been accepted, which will add still further to the burden of discontent. One of these will be the appointment of a French Comptroller for all the finances of the Moorish Empire, and if this is conceded, it will be a sad blow to the aspirations of the Moorish Ministers, for loyalty, without perquisites, is almost unknown in Morocco. A suggestion will also be brought forward for the policing of some of the towns of the interior, but I understand that if it meets with opposition it will not be pressed for the time being.

Morocco presents an almost perfect example of the Feudal System. We see the Sultan, the nominal ruler of the country, surrounded by powerful tributary chiefs, who are absolute lords of their own dominions. These in turn are split up into tribes, each under its own Caid, who in times of emergency rally to the standard of their feudal chief, and fight either for or against the Sultan, as he may direct. Some of the Caids wield more power than the Sultan himself. Take, for instance, the props of the new throne like the Glaui, Caid of the Atlas, Si-Aissa-Ben-Omar, Caid of Abda, or Hamoo Zayani. Such men are useful in the initial stages of a revolution, but are a source of weakness to the crown when success has been accomplished. They are the Northumberlands, the Hotspurs, the Bolingbrokes, and Warwicks

of Morocco, ever ready to challenge the authority of the Sultan and to measure their power with his. The Feudal System has been further complicated during the change of dynasty by the appointment of Proconsuls in the manner so familiar under the Roman Empire. In order to raise money and to reward his supporters, Hafid has been obliged to farm out the high offices of State, and to appoint chiefs over the tribesmen who are not always acceptable to them. These men have paid heavily for their positions, and may be said to be shareholders in the new throne, and they will have to reimburse themselves by squeezing those who are placed under their rule. This may lead to trouble, and certainly does not make for good government.

No Sultan can really call himself master of his dominions as long as he is at the mercy of every changing breeze of opinion amongst his tribesmen. He must be independent of them, and his central authority must be sufficient to hold them in check. Therefore, as an indispensable preliminary to a peaceful settlement of the present crisis, Moulai el Hafid has to create an army, well trained, regularly paid, and ever ready to take the field, to nip in the bud any attempt of a Caid to make himself independent of the Maghzen.

But how long will the Moors continue to obey a Sultan whom they are beginning to judge from his actions to be little, if any, better than his predecessor? At present the country is fairly peaceful, yet it is not the peace of contentment but of recuperation, and the tribes will soon be ready for

another "outing." Already the tendency of public opinion has been expressed in the rebellion of Moulai Mohammed. This was nipped in the bud because it was premature in its conception and action; but the sympathies of the people of Fez were with the outspoken Moulai Mohammed on that Friday morning when, mounted on a wretched mule, loaded with fetters, and covered with the dust of the road, he was brought into his brother's presence to answer the awful charge of having publicly declared for a "Jehad" or Holy War. At the interview which followed, Hafid must have felt the more embarrassed of the two. What a strange study the contrast presents in the fate of the three brothers. Moulai Mohammed was hurried to prison, there to be cut off by a cup of arsenic. Moulai el Hafid on the throne is perhaps the unhappiest of the brothers. Abdul Aziz is now a leading figure in the social and diplomatic life of Tangier. But of the three there is no doubt who stands the highest in the estimation of his countrymen. It is Moulai Mohammed, one-eyed, defiant, and uncompromising, now gathered to his fathers by poison for having the temerity to advocate a Holy War against the Infidel, which formerly was considered the very *raison d'être* for the existence of the children of the Prophet.

The extreme weakness of the central power of the Maghzen has been further exemplified by recent events at Melilla. The Riff tribesmen, naturally resenting the peaceful penetration into their domains of the Spaniards in search of

mineral wealth, have retaliated with fanatical vigour, and Moulai el Hafid has proved powerless to check the outbreak, even if he has any real desire to do so.

But what is going to happen in the future if the precedent prematurely set by Moulai Mohammed is followed by others with more followers and better laid plans? How is Hafid going to hold his own if he has the full force of public opinion against him? I think there are only two alternatives open to him, and the interest lies in seeing which he will adopt: (1) He can continue to rule at Fez with the active co-operation and support of the French, and thus gradually drift away from the Nationalist Party, whose champion he was supposed to be; or (2), He can leave Fez, under the pretext of visiting Rabat and Marrackesh, and never return to the northern capital. He will thus be able to avoid coming into direct contact with the Powers, and will escape the odium of responsibility for many of the actions which made his brother so unpopular.

To deal with the first of these alternatives—If Hafid separates himself from national feeling in Morocco, he must either go the way of Abdul Aziz, or rely on some external support to prop his tottering throne. This can only be given by the French. Hafid can claim that support as a matter of right, and it is difficult to see how the French could refuse it him after the precedent they themselves have created by the active assistance they rendered to Abdul Aziz, which alone enabled him

to start on his ill-starred expedition to the southern capital. France on that occasion declared it was her duty to support the Sultan who was recognised by Europe, and as that Sultan is now Moulai el Hafid, he surely has every right to claim the same privileges as his brother. The strategical and political position of France in Morocco is so strong, that her moral support alone will shortly be sufficient to keep an unpopular Sultan on the throne. She has an army on the Algerian frontier, another occupies Casa Blanca, her railroads are creeping forward, she polices her ports, and her officers are to reorganise and drill the Moorish Army. This force can only be kept in the service of Hafid with the support of the French, because they alone can find the money necessary to ensure a continuity of its loyalty. France also controls the customs, and is determined to have French officials in charge of the State finances, not only with a view to ensuring their efficient collection, but also to guard against their improper distribution. Thus Hafid cannot fail to fall gradually more and more under the influence of the French, until France is recognised as the Suzerain Power, with a right to nominate his successor to the throne. It is merely the old process again by which almost every semi-barbarous power has passed into the band of civilised communities. The Sultan will still keep his title, but his authority will be purely nominal, and his position will be made dependent on his good conduct. The rôle that France has had to play will be immediately



simplified if the *entente* between France and Germany on the subject of Morocco is really sincere and lasting.

But supposing Hafid disdains to be a Sultan under such conditions, and prefers to play the rôle of the patriot to the end and to throw in his fortunes with the Nationalist party, which must eventually bring him into conflict with Europe. Then his only course is to leave Fez, thus removing himself from the sphere of French influence, and take up his residence at the southern capital. There, amidst his own Berber tribesmen, who will remain loyal to him under such conditions, he may reflect on the failure of his own ambitions, and mourn the gradual passing away of Morocco's independence. For some years he may exercise a show of authority over the few tribes in his immediate neighbourhood, and he will still bear the once proud title of "Sherceefian Majesty." But year by year his power and his influence will grow less, until the last representative of nine successive Moorish dynasties sinks into obscurity, under the shadow of the mighty Atlas.

MAP OF  
ELAIA PENINSULA



APPENDIX I.

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COPY OF THE FIRST CONCESSION EVER  
GRANTED BY A SULTAN OF MOROCCO  
FOR THE WORKING OF THE MINES.  

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IN THE NAME OF GOD, WHOM ALONE WE WORSHIP, WHO  
ALONE CAN HELP US, WHO ALONE HAS POWER OVER  
US ALL.

WITH the aid of God, who alone orders all things, who alone can solve all earthly problems, and who ordaineth that all things shall come to pass in their appointed time, I, MOULAI EL HAFID, have been chosen by all my people as SULTAN OF MOROCCO, and I have arrived at Fez, which is the heart of my Country. On my arrival at Fez, Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton came to me and asked me to join with them in Partnership to prospect for and to develop the Mines of Morocco, and I have entered into partnership with Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns, under the Eighteen following conditions. We have signed this document agreeing on these conditions. They have explained to me how advantageous it will be for my country to develop its mineral resources. Therefore I have accepted their Partnership under the conditions contained in this Agreement, and all this I have done of my own free will. I have concluded this Partnership because they were the first to come to me and offered to assist me when I

needed help. Therefore this Partnership has been arranged between us on the Fourth day of Ergemb, in the year 1326.

*Clause 1.* Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns are entitled to commence prospecting for and working minerals immediately the country is sufficiently settled, but they are not bound to do so until the time mentioned in Clause 17.

*Clause 2.* I hereby grant to Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns the sole and exclusive right to prospect for and to develop and work and extract all minerals found in Morocco, either gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, tin, zinc, oil, coal, precious stones, or any other species of mineral which may be found.

*Clause 3.* This Agreement shall hold good for FORTY YEARS after work has been commenced on the Mines. Such period of forty years shall commence to run from the time of production on each mine. At the termination of the period of forty years on each mine, such mine and the machinery and materials thereon shall become the property of the Sultan of Morocco.

*Clause 4.* Whenever practical native labour is to be employed in the Mines, but in the event of a sufficient supply of native labour not being forthcoming, labourers may be imported from any part of the world as long as they are Mohammedans. The Overseers and Engineers and skilled workmen are to be English.

*Clause 5.* The Government undertakes to protect all prospecting parties and all those engaged in work at the Mines.

*Clause 6.* The Sultan will send Criers to all parts of the country, telling the people to work in the Mines, as it is for the benefit of Morocco. The Sultan will arrange the supply of labour so as, as far as possible, to obtain it at low rates of wage.

*Clause 7.* Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns are to find all money which they consider necessary for prospecting and working the mines, and all such expense, including the sum of £300,000 mentioned in Clauses 11, 15, and 17, are to be deducted from the

gross receipts of the Mines, after which the net profits shall be divided between the Sultan and Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns, as to twenty-five per cent of such profits to the Sultan, and seventy-five per cent to the said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns.

*Clause 8.* Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns have the right to make all necessary roads, and to provide other means of transport necessary for conveying materials and minerals and passengers to and from the Mines to centres of distribution. They also have the right to lay down rails, where this can be done with safety, for the conveyance of such materials, minerals, and passengers.

*Clause 9.* At the expiration of the forty years during which this Agreement holds good, the Sultan has the right to put each mine up to auction and to sell his interest in them to the highest bidder, after Ellis Ashmead Bartlett, Harry Carleton, or their Assigns have had the first refusal at the price offered by the highest bidder.

*Clause 10.* Whilst this Agreement holds good the Government of Morocco will put no export duty or other tax on any minerals extracted from the Mines, nor any import duty on any materials required for use in the Mines, such as machinery, tools, coal, etc. In the event of any Foreign Power endeavouring to claim such import or export duty, the parties to this Agreement will mutually assist one another to resist such a claim.

*Clause 11.* Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns will pay the sum of Three hundred thousand pounds to the Sultan of Morocco, to be delivered in Tetuan to a person whom the Sultan will appoint, upon the conditions of Clauses 15, 16, and 17 of this Agreement.

*Clause 12.* This Agreement holds good, both before and after I, MOULAI EL HAFID, am recognised as Sultan of Morocco by the Powers. I will only sign Treaties or enter into Agreements with Foreign Powers subject to the interests created under this Partnership. Neither will I renew any existing Treaty unless it be subject to the interests created under this Agreement, and nothing

whatever which may happen will stop me from fulfilling this Agreement to the letter. I do this out of my friendship towards Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton, who came to help me in my hour of need.

*Clause 13.* In the event of a Foreign Power interfering after work has begun, I will do all that I possibly can to stop such interference.

*Clause 14.* The Sultan has the right to appoint administrators to see that he gets his share of Twenty-five per cent of the net profits.

*Clause 15.* The Sultan shall furnish security to the value of Three hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds (£375,000) for the repayment of said sum of Three hundred thousand pounds (£300,000) in real property in and out of Fez, and this security shall be held by Ellis Ashmead Bartlett, Harry Carleton, or their Assigns, until the said sum of Three hundred thousand pounds (£300,000) and interest at Five per cent per annum has been realised by the said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns, from receipts of the Mines.

*Clause 16.* This security has been specified, valued, and transferred to Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns, in a Supplementary Document.

*Clause 17.* During a period of ten years from the signing of this Agreement, Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns can, if they wish, at any time claim repayment of said sum of Three hundred thousand pounds (£300,000) paid to the Sultan of Morocco, with Five per cent added accumulative interest, provided that the said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns have not at such time realised the sum of Three hundred thousand pounds and interest under Clause 15, and if this sum and interest is not repaid to them by the Government of Morocco within three months from such demand, the said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns shall have the right to immediately realise the security held by them at such price and upon such terms as they may think fit.

*Clause 18.* I, MOULAI EL HAFID, Sultan of Morocco, bind myself to grant no rights to prospect for, develop, or work mines in my dominions in Morocco to any other parties save Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns during the time that this Agreement of Partnership holds good, and all Treaties signed by me will be subject to the interest created under this Agreement.

*Clause 19.* The rights granted in this Agreement to Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton can only be assigned by them to an English Company.

*Clause 20.* Unless the sum of Three hundred thousand pounds, mentioned in Clause 11, is paid to the Sultan or his representative within Six months of the signing of this Agreement, either the Sultan under his Seal, or the said Ellis Ashmead Bartlett and Harry Carleton or their Assigns may, by notice in writing, put an end to this Agreement, and thereupon this Agreement shall cease and determine without any liability on either side.

I DO HEREBY SIGN this Document with my Seal on this 4th day of Ergemb, in the year 1326.

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## APPENDIX II.

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### SPANISH ARMY AT MELILLA.

Lieutenant-General in Command—DON JOSE MARINA.

Aides-de-camp— { Captain de Bascaran.  
                          { Captain Cavanillas.

Special Service Officer *à la suite*—Colonel Prima de Vera.

Chief of the Staff—Colonel Jordana.

Officer Commanding Artillery—Colonel Marques  
Fuentesanta.

Officer Commanding Engineers—Colonel d'Aguiar  
(Marquis de Villa Marina).

Military Governor of Melilla—General Arizona.



## DIVISIONAL TROOPS.

Melilla Brigade—General Real.  
 59th Regiment Melilla—3 Battalions.  
 68th Regiment African „

The Melilla Squadron—  
 1 Field Battery.  
 1 Mountain Battery.  
 6 Batteries Garrison Artillery.  
 1 Company Marines.  
 2 Companies Engineers.

3rd Brigade—Cazadores—General Imaz.  
 3rd Barcelona Cazadores.  
 8th Alba de Tormes Cazadores.  
 13th Merida „  
 14th Estella „  
 16th Reus „  
 19th Alfonso XIII. „  
 1 Squadron Cavalry.  
 1 Mountain Artillery.

## 1ST DIVISION.

(General Orosko).

Chief of the Staff—Colonel Bettzand de Lis.

1st Brigade—General Aguilera.  
 1. Regiment del Rey.  
 38. Regiment Leon.

2nd Brigade { General San Martin (promoted).  
                   { General Diaz-Vicaris (killed Sept. 30).  
 6th Regiment Saboya.  
 50th Regiment Vad-Ras.

Cavalry—2 Squadrons (Reina Christina, Cazadores).  
 Artillery—2 Brigades Field Artillery (75-mm. Schneider  
 Q.F.F.).  
 Engineers—1 Field Company. 1 Telegraph Company.

## 2ND DIVISION (Cazadores).

General Tovar.

Chief of Staff—Colonel Ardanaz.

1st Brigade—General Morales.

1st Catalonia Battalion.

5th Tarifa

”

7th Ciudad-Rodrigo Battalion.

12th Segorbe

”

17th Chiclana

”

18th Talavera

”

2nd Brigade—General Alfau.

2nd Madrid Battalion.

4th Barbastro Battalion.

6th Figueras

”

9th Arapiles

”

10th Las Navas

”

11th Llerena

”

Cavalry—2 Squadrons.

Artillery—2 Brigades Mountain Artillery.

2 Mixed Companies Engineers.

## 3RD DIVISION.

General Sotomayor.

Chief of Staff—Lieutenant-Colonel Gaminde.

1st Brigade—General Buella.

3rd Regiment Principe.

51st Regiment Guipuzcoa.

2nd Brigade—General Ayala.

27th Regiment Cuenia.

36th Regiment Burgos.

Cavalry—2 Squadrons Alfonso XIII. (Cazadores).

Artillery—2 Brigades Field Artillery (75-mm. Schneider Q.F.F.).

Engineers—1 Field Company. 1 Telegraph Company.

## CAVALRY DIVISION.

General Huerta.

Hussar Brigade—General Prince Carlos de Bourbon.

Princessa's de Pavia.

The Lancers de la Reina.

## THE LAST BRIGADE.

General Carbo.

11th Regiment--San Fernando.

42nd Regiment--Serinola.

Each regiment has two battalions of 800 men, but the Melilla and African Regiments are three battalions, because their depot battalions are at Melilla. The Reina Christina and Alfonso XIII. squadrons are of 130 horses. The regiments of Hussars and Lancers 110 horses.

The Cazadores Brigade are organised as fighting units of six battalions, with one squadron and one Brigade Artillery.

Each Brigade and Division is complete with medical and administrative services as fighting units of six battalions, with one squadron and one Brigade Field Artillery.

Lieutenant Gibbs, a British officer, serving as a volunteer.

THE END.





